

A
COMPANION
FOR THE
GRAND FESTIVAL
OF THE
Christian Church
OR THE
LORD'S-DAY.

With FORMS of PRAYER and
PRAISE for the Assistance of
PRIVATE DEVOTION.

And DIRECTIONS for the more Devout
Attendance on the Publick Worship of
GOD, according to the
LITURGY of the Church of
ENGLAND.

BEING
A SUPPLEMENT to Mr. NELSON'S
Companion for the *Fasts and Festivals*, &c.

Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary,
Levit. x. 30.

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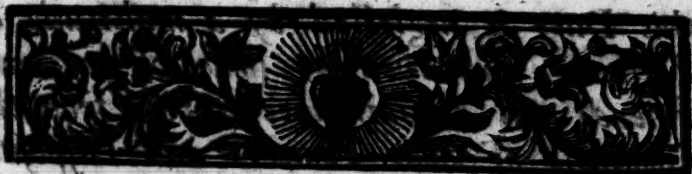
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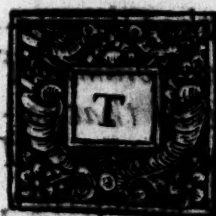
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THE PREFACE.



HE Design of this Preface is to give the Reader a short Account of the following Discourse; and the Reason of my Composing it; which is this.

I have ever esteem'd a due Regard to the Lord's-Day, to be not only an important Duty in it self, (as being a part of that Homage and Service, which becomes us, both as Creatures, and Christians,) but as one of the great Means and Instruments of Religion, and such as will have a mighty Influence upon us in the whole course of our Lives; and indeed, to be so absolutely necessary, that without it 'tis impossible to be Religious, or to observe the other parts of our Duty to God, our Neighbours, or our selves.

And I cou'd not but observe how sadly this Duty is neglected by a multitude of Persons, and even by some of my own Friends and Acquaintance, who (from the Goodness of their Tempers and Dispositions in other Things) I had Reason to hope wou'd amend in this particular, if their Obligations to do so were fairly represented to them.

When I first consider'd this Matter, and entertain'd Thoughts of endeavouring to cure (if possible) this Evil, I remembred there was some Directions for the Observation of the Lord's-Day, in a Volume of Judge Hale's Meditations, sent by that excellent Person to his Children; which I thought of getting Printed by themselves, and dispersing for that purpose.

But when I came to read them again, and with more Attention, I perceiv'd they wou'd not (by Reason of too much Brevity in some things, total Omissions in others, and being accommodated in almost all, to the particular Circumstances of the Persons to whom they were directed,) I say, I found that upon these Accounts they wou'd not, so well as I cou'd wish, answer my End; nor did I know of any other that wou'd do it better.

And



The Preface.

v

And so I e'en resolv'd to spend a few spare hours, and (that I might do the work of the Day, in its Day,) especially some part of the Lord's Day, vacant from Publick Worship, in drawing up a kind of System, or Compendium of Rules for the better Observation of this Day, suited to the Condition and Circumstances of the Persons for whose Use I chiefly design'd them; which I thought might easily be collected from those Books, with which the Bounty of Providence has furnish'd me, or the Kindness of Friends might supply me.

This I particularly mention, because I wou'd not be understood to assume to myself the Subject-matter of this little Book; for it is (I freely own to the Reader) as to the main and most valuable parts of it, drawn out of the Writings of a very great number of the most Eminent and Celebrated Divines of our Church; who (not in just Discourses, but) occasionally, and among other things, have dropp'd something upon one or another of the Subjects which make up this Discourse: Tho' it wou'd (to use an Ingenious Mans Words in a like case) be as hard to refer each Sentence to the very place from whence it was drawn, as to bring every distinct drop in a Gask of Wine to

the particular Grape from whence it was press'd.

So that I have no other Claim to the Merit of this Composition, than the ranking and disposing of things, which I found scatter'd in many Discourses, under their distinct Heads, and digesting them into a kind of System of good Counsels and Rules for the due Observation of the Lord's-Day.

And tho' in these I have abundantly exceeded my first Model (which was less, by above half, than what I here offer,) yet that they might fall upon the Readers Mind with the greater Weight, I was willing to enlarge it a little more, to prove the Divine Appointment and Institution of the Lord's-Day: And the rather, because I fear there is too much Truth in that Observation which some * have made, that since that Notion has prevail'd, that the Lord's-Day is built upon the same Foundation with the other Holidays, most People have indulg'd themselves in excessive Liberties on it; and are so far from taking care that they and their Families be employ'd wholly in the Worship of God, either in Publick or Private at this time, that they have no Regard to the Duties of it, but spend the Day in secular Business, or in Idleness, or even in downright Prophaneness.

* Dr. Edwards's Fast Sermon.

I have

I have also taken care briefly to represent the Sense of Antiquity, and of our own Church concerning this matter; because I have observ'd a great many People who wou'd fain be esteem'd Church-Men of the first Rank, nay, the only Church-Men, do look upon the serious Observation of the Lord's-Day as a piece of Modern Preciseness, and do frequently brand all those with the Names of Phanaticks, and Dissenters, or Low-Church-Men, who regard it. If a Man be never so zealous for Conformity, constant in his Attendance on the Publick Service, and conformable to all the Rites and Usages of the Church, yet if he do not allow himself in all the Liberties some People are for on this Day, he shall be sure to be run down under the Character of a Presbyterian, or a Person not well affected to the Church.

The Sanctification of this Day is what the Dissenters are, for the most part, very Exemplary in; and therefore it must by all means be represented as a piece of Phanaticism, to agree with them in it; For some Men can't think there can be any thing that is good and praise-worthy among such Schismaticks; or if the Thing be good in it self, they are as confident as if the Secrets of their Hearts were known to them, that their

*Zeal for it proceeds only from Hypocrisy :
And truly they will not appear like Hypo-
crites !*

*This uncharitable Censure is perhaps ow-
ing in some measure (as has been observ'd
upon another occasion *) to those unhappy
Times, when many, under the pretence of
Religion, and a zealous Concern for God's
Honour, particularly the strict Observation
of the Lord's-Day, did very vile and wick-
ed things. Because in those Times which
stand condemn'd for hypocritical, there was
a shew of greater Sanctity and Strictness
than too many among 'em had in Reality,
it is thought necessary to keep at as great a
distance as may be from the like appearance.
For this Reason all Endeavours for Refor-
mation of Manners, and particularly the set-
ting up the Worship of God in Families, and
the serious Observation of the Lord's-Day,
is by too many exploded ; they are thought
Things fit only to distinguish Hypocrites, and
Persons disaffected to the Church and Go-
vernment.*

*But certainly this is wretched Reason-
ing ; for it will not justify our Neglect of
the plain and undoubted Duties of Religi-
on, that some Men have made them a cloak
for Impiety and Wickedness. Some Men
have made mighty Pretensions of Zeal for
the*

the Church of England, and been very clamorous upon pretended Apprehensions of its Danger, (and the like Practices are now carrying on again) when at the same time they had not a Grain of true Zeal for Religion and the Church, but were only seeking themselves, and the pitiful Interests of their Party: But because these Men make a stalking Horse of the Church, and gloss over their corrupt Purposes with fair Pretences of promoting its Interests, shall that be a Reason against our true and sincere Endeavours for this purpose? No, certainly; Wicked Mens abuse of what a plain and positive Law of God hath made our Duty, is no Argument against our performing it in a due manner.

And therefore I have always thought it a very sorry Argument against our Liturgy (tho' it be the best that most of the ignorant Dissenters are furnished with) that it is taken from the Mass-Book, and therefore truly they can't like it. Do we allow this to be good Reasoning? No, we tell them that the greater part of it had a place in the Ancient Liturgies long before the Mass had a Being; that what is Superstitious in it self, we have purg'd out; and that the Abuse of the rest is no sufficient Reason against the Use of it; that there-

therefore tho' they abus'd many excellent things to the Service of their Superstition, they may notwithstanding be very good Instruments of Devotion, and true Religion among us. This Answer needs only to be apply'd to the present Case; and it will be as good as can be given to such as wou'd make other Peoples Abuse of the Lord's Day, a Reason for their neglecting it; tho', I fear, it will be to very little purpose to endeavour the Conviction and Satisfaction of Men by Reason, who (whatever they may pretend) owe their Aversion and Prejudices against this Duty, to nothing but Prophaneness, and a Contempt of Religion.

In the mean time, 'tis much to be lamented, that Men who act so directly contrary to the Injunctions and Orders of the Church, shou'd be honour'd with the Title of Church-Men, and with many, of the best, nay only Church-Men. 'Tis true, this cannot be altogether avoided, unless the Discipline of the Church cou'd be effectually revived, and executed; for Men of no Religion, if they must profess any, will for the most part, pretend to the legally Establish'd Church and Religion; but if we cannot legally fling them out of the Church, yet we ought not surely to own them; for that will be to fix a very ill Character upon
our

our Church, our Religion, and our selves. Tho' Ecclesiastical Authority be under such Restraints that Church-censures cannot be always duly executed, and such Men as are a Scandal to the Church, cannot be actually shut out of it, (as they wou'd have been in the Primitive Times) yet they have no manner of Claim to the Name of Church-Men; and wou'd themselves as much avoid the Name, as they do the Place, and both for the same Reason, viz. the Relation they bear to God's true Religion, if they did not want a Cloak for their Impieties and Immoralities, and hope that a pretended Zeal for the Church, wou'd atone for their real Enmity to Religion.

Men of this Stamp, who swear and beclor, and drink for the Church, can never possibly do it any good, but on the contrary entail Mischief upon it; and therefore we had better a thousand times have their Room than their Company. They may be thought, by inconsiderate People, a great Support to that Church, for which they express so flaming a Zeal; but Men can never have a true value for the Church, who have no value for Religion. Indeed, while their Interest and the Church is on a side, they may continue its Friends; but Interest will not lie; if the Church and Interest part, farewell the Church; for why shou'd a
Man

Man expose himself to any Hazard for any one Religion, who is indifferent to all, and careless whether there be any or none? This Sort of Men are well represented by the Images we see in many Churches, that are plac'd in that bending Posture, as if they bore upon their Shoulders the Weight of the Building; whereas, in truth, they are only the Fancy of the Architect, and bear no Weight at all.

So if some Men do but zealously declare against Dissenters, and Vote at Elections for those whom they esteem in the Church's Interest, Drink its Health, and Damn all that differ from it, this they think Ground sufficient to entitle 'em to the Character of Church-men, tho' they seldom see the inside of a Church, and as seldom shew any Signs of Devotion when they do, never perhaps receive the Holy Sacrament in their Lives, (unless to qualify themselves for an Office) and indeed live such Lives, in all other respects, that if the Discipline of the Church cou'd be duly exercised, wou'd exclude them even from the Communion of Prayers. And yet these worthy Members, and Ornaments of the Church of England, by their Goodwill, wou'd Engross it to themselves, and allow none but such as they are, to have any Part, or Lot in this Matter. If a Man comes

comes constantly to Church Morning and Afternoon, and, as he has Opportunity, receives the Holy Sacrament perhaps often, attends the daily Prayers, and behaves himself Reverently and Devoutly in the Service, and always lives as becomes a Member of the Christian Church; yet he shall not with these great Church-men be allow'd any better Name than that of Fanatick, or Low-Church-man; he shall be sure to pass for nothing else but a back-friend, or sly Enemy to the Church. In one word; to be too constant and serious in all the Ordinances and Institutions of the Church, especially if for a due Regard to the LORD'S DAY, employing those Parts of it that are vacant from Publick Worship, in the Private Exercises of Religion; in Family-Duties, Catechizing Children and Servants, reading God's Word, recollecting and repeating Sermons, joint Prayer to God, and singing his Praises; I say a due Regard to these Things, tho' they are enjoyn'd and recommended by the Church it self, is (with many pretended Zealots for it) an ill Sign, and hath a Fanatical Aspect with it.

Among the Distinctions coin'd of late to divide and ruin us, this is one, That there be some that be OF, but not FOR the Church:

* Mr. Brif-
sted's Ser-
mon at
Lewes,
p. 16.

Church: " But sure (as one well ob-
serves *) it were as true, and as proper
to say (what has been long observ'd, and
much lamented by all good Men, by all
true Church-men) that there be some (in-
deed too many) who pretend to be both
Of and For the Church; Zealous, or
rather Furious for it, but not for the Re-
ligion of the Church, indeed for no Reli-
gion. They are for the Church, consider'd
as a Party, not for it as a Church, is de-
scrib'd by the Church it self in the 19th
of her 39 Articles, A Congregation of
Faithful Men, where the pure Word of
God is preach'd, and his Sacraments ad-
ministred. They are for little or no
Preaching; for no Practice at all; for no
Sacraments, unless it be for Ceremony on-
ly, or to qualify for a Place. In a word,
they wou'd have a Church without Reli-
gion, without any Christians in it; nay,
a Civil Heathen wou'd be counted a Dis-
senter. Such have too long presum'd to
call themselves Church-men, the best, the
only Church-men, who really are the great-
est Scandals to the Church, and justly de-
serve to be cut off from it.

But

But 'tis time to return from this Digression; which I hope the Reader will excuse; for tho' I have gone a little out of the way, it has been with a View to my main End, viz. the clearing the Church of the Scandal of that Prophaneness, which some great Pretenders wou'd bring upon it, and shewing the Unreasonableness of representing Men as Disaffected to the Church, only for doing it all the Honour they are able.

And I cannot but here add, that as the Church is not to be blamed for these Mens Prophan Conversation, so neither is it reasonable to reproach her with it. This has been the common way of many who separate from us, to cast the Scandal which is due only to particular Persons, upon the Frame and Constitution of the Church. And particularly in the case of prophaneing the Lord's Day, how will some of 'em truit us, as if it were a thing allow'd of and countenanc'd among us? Whereas the Church hath taken great care that this Day be as solemnly observ'd among us, as it can be among themselves. And therefore as those who give occasion for these Aspersions and Reflections, have a heavy Account to give; so the Uncharitableness of such as impute

pute their Crimes to the Church, which disowns and condemns them, can never be excus'd: Nor wou'd they think it fair to be used so themselves. This, indeed, is a Fault more common among us than among them; but they know there are Miscarriages, which they have at least as great a share of as their Neighbours: And yet so long as they receive no Countenance, or Encouragement from the Constitution of their Societies, they wou'd not willingly have 'em charg'd to their account. Let them therefore deal by others, as they wou'd desire to be dealt by themselves.

As to that part of the following Papers which regards the Controversies with our Dissenting Brethren, I shall only say this, That I have not said one word out of Prejudice to any of their Persons, (many of whom I very much value;) but being fully convinc'd in my own Conscience, that the Church of England is a sound Part of the Catholick Church; and that a Man who has no other Design but to get to Heaven, may safely continue in the Communion of it, I was naturally led to recommend it to others; especially considering the great and inexpressible Mischiefs of Separations and Divisions. "For whose Experience doth not
" find

" find what Confusion of Order, and Breach
 " of the Sacred Bond of Love hath sprung
 " from this Dissention; how it hath rent
 " the Body of the Church into divers Parts,
 " and divided her People into divers Sects;
 " how it hath taught the Sheep to despise
 " their Pastors, and alienated their Pastors
 " from the Love of their Flocks; how it
 " hath strength'ned the Irreligious in their
 " Impieties, and hath raised the Hopes of
 " the Sacrilegious Devourers of the Remains
 " of Christ's Patrimony; and given way to
 " the common Adversary of God's Truth,
 " and our Prosperity to grow great in our
 " Land without Resistance; who seeth not
 " how it hath distracted the Minds of the
 " Multitude, and shaken their Faith, and
 " scandalized their Weakness, and hath
 " generally kill'd the very Heart of true
 " Piety and Religious Devotion, by chang-
 " ing our Zeal towards Christ's Glory, in-
 " to the fire of Envy, and Malice, and
 " * Heart-burning, and Zeal to every
 " Man's private Cause?

These are the sad Consequences which ge-
 nerally follow from Divisions; and sure
 there are none who consider 'em, in the Fear
 of God, but will allow they are worth avoid-
 ing, at the expence of every thing but a
 good Conscience. As for such as do indeed

(a)

separate

* Vide
 Preface to
 M. Hooker's
 Eccles.
 Polity.

separate from us for the sake of that; verily believing, that the Terms of our Communion are unlawful, and who cannot upon a serious Examination, be brought to think otherwise; they certainly act as becomes Christians; and tho' they are mistaken, yet are they excusable, before God and Man. But sure those, who tho' they dislike some things in our Communion, yet do not pretend they are sinful, or that it is against their Consciences to join in the use of them, ought to suffer the Considerations of Peace and Unity to prevail for their continuance in the Communion of the Church, and not break and disturb it, only to please their Fancies, or their Humours.

In drawing up the Directions for our more decent Deportment in the Publick Worship of God, I all along made the Church itself, in her Rubricks, and Canons, &c. my Guide and Councillor. I have not advised Men to obey faster than the Church commands, and to introduce Usages and Customs of their own Heads; which instead of contributing to Decency and Order, tends to nothing but Confusion. I know there are a sort of People, who value themselves on the Name of High-Church-Men, that do not think this sufficient; but despise such as keep strictly to the Rule of Church-Communion
and

and Worship; and think it a Breach of that Rule to go higher than the Church it self has directed, as Men of a Lower Church than themselves. But certainly those who act in this manner, are the True Church-Men, and the other exalted Pretences are no less a Deviation from the true Church, than Superstition is from the true Religion.

And I wish this were well consider'd in other Instances, as well as those to which I have had a principal regard; and that Men would not set up their own private Notions and Opinions, against the publick Doctrine of the Church. We should not then be perplex'd with swarms of Pamphlets against the King's Supremacy in Ecclesiastical Affairs; against the Validity of Ordination in the other Reform'd Churches; in Defence of the Absolute Necessity of Sacerdotal Absolution to the Pardon of Sin; and the Propitiatory Sacrifice of Bread and Wine in the Eucharist. Nor would Mens Minds be troubled with Disputes about the very Essentials of Christian Religion, such as Debase and Degrade the Son of God himself, as hath been done too much of late. These are foreign and exotic Doctrines, no where mention'd in the Canons, Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church, except it be to condemn them. The Reverend Bishop

Hall speaks very elegantly to this purpose.
 " The Church of England (says he) in
 " whose Motherhood we have all just Rea-
 " son to pride our selves, both in much
 " Wisdom and Piety, delivered her Judg-
 " ment concerning all necessary Points of
 " Religion, in so compleat a Body of Divi-
 " nity, as all Hearts may rest in: These
 " we read, these we write under, as pro-
 " fessing not their Truth only, but their
 " Sufficiency also. The Voice of God our
 " Father in his Scriptures, and (out of
 " these) the Voice of the Church our Mo-
 " ther in her Articles, is that which must
 " both guide and settle our Resolutions:
 " Whatever is besides these, is but either
 " private, or unnecessary, and uncertain:
 " Oh that whiles we sweat and bleed for
 " the Maintenance of these Oracular Truths,
 " we cou'd be persuaded to remit of our
 " Heat in the pursuit of Opinions. These,
 " these are they that distract the Church,
 " violate our Peace, scandalize the Weak,
 " advantage our Enemies. Fire upon the
 " Hearth warms the Body, but if it be
 " misplac'd, burns the House. My Bre-
 " thren, let us be Zealous for our God;
 " every hearty Christian will pour Oil, and
 " not Water, on this Holy Flame: But let
 " us take heed lest a blind Self-love, stiff
 " Preju-

" Prejudice, and factious Partiality impose
 " upon us, instead of the Causes of God;
 " let us be suspicious of all new Heresies,
 " and careless of all Unprofitable; and let
 " us hate to think our selves wiser than the
 " Church, or better than our Superiors:
 " And if any Man thinketh that he seeth
 " farther than his Fellows, in these Theo-
 " logical Prospects, let his Tongue keep the
 " Counsels of his Eyes; lest whiles he af-
 " fects the Fame of deeper Learning, he em-
 " broil the Church, and raise his Glory up-
 " on the Rublick Ruins *.

As for the Forms of Prayer and Praise
 added at the end, I have collected them from
 some of the best Books of Devotion I cou'd
 meet with. And I believe there is no Man
 possess'd of the Spirit of Rational and Solid
 Devotion, but must be greatly assisted by
 them. I must confess, they are not fitted to
 please some Folks; whose Prayers, tho' they
 are Forms, are often as idle, vain, and un-
 digested, as the most unpremeditated Effusi-
 ons; and seem to be rather the effect of a
 wild Superstition, than a reasonable Piety.
 It us'd to be a saying of the Learned Sel-
 den's, That we take care what we say to
 Men, but to God we may say any thing.
 And really it looks as if Men thought so,
 when even premeditately, and in the most
 solemn

* Weeks *
 Preparation
 on for the
 Sacra-
 ment; and
 many o-
 thers.

* Epistle's
 Dedic. be-
 fore Old
 Religion.

* Weeks
Preparati-
on for the
Sacra-
ment; and
many o-
thers.

* Epistles
Declarat-
ion of
Religion

solemn manner, they utter such absurd things
before him, as they are taught in too many
Manuels * of Devotion, a Title they have
afforded with very little Reason, if we con-
sider of what Materials they are generally
made up, and the common tendency of them.
The Forms I have chosen are free from all
affected Expressions, fantastical Allusions,
insignificant Allegories, pretended Wit, and
rash Application of Holy Scripture to the pre-
sent purpose, which are Vices too common in
many others, and do by no means become the
Solemnity of Prayer. And therefore I have
often thought our Dissenting Brethren mighti-
ly out, when they made the Plainness and
Simplicity of our Liturgy, an Objection
against it. For by this it is rendered more
intelligible to all Capacities, than it would
be if it were full of turgid and swelling Ex-
pressions; and yet it is not such a Plainness
or low Flatness, as should make it be despised
by Men of the greatest Sense and Abilities.
It is a Plainness and Simplicity that is an
Excellence in it, rather than a Blemish,
and ought to recommend it to the Approba-
tion and Use of all amongst us; being ex-
press'd in a serious unaffected Style, proper to
excite true Devotion, and to make Men
Pray with Understanding. And the follow-
ing Prayers will also, in some measure, I
hope,

hope, to deserve the same Character; and as
 such, I recommend 'em to the use of the De-
 vout Reader, (if he be not already better
 provided) than I am I trust. It had sd to
 be. It may perhaps be expected, that before
 I send this long Preface, I should make some
 apology for the Plainness and Inequalities of
 the Style, and the other Imperfections of the
 following Discourse. I wish indeed they
 were fewer, but am very glad at the same
 time, there are so many things in it, that
 will serve the Interests of Piety and Virtue.
 I may say this without the Suspicion of Va-
 nity, because I have so freely owned to whom
 the Reader is indebted for 'em. Not so much
 to me (as I said) as to some of the Greatest
 and best Men, that ever were in the Church of
 Christ. Some of these flourish'd in the first
 Ages of Christianity, and wrote in a Lan-
 guage I do not understand: For the Passa-
 ges therefore that are taken from them, I
 am oblig'd to those Worthy Persons *, who
 have made 'em speak in our own Tongue
 so many useful and excellent things, which
 (if we do but give the BIBLE the Pre-
 ference) can scarce be over-valu'd. For a
 great deal of the rest I owe my Acknowledg-
 ments to several of our most eminent English
 Divines; to a greater number indeed, than
 any Body will easily believe or imagine;
 there

* Bp Wake,
 Dr. Cave,
 Mr. Reeves,
 Sir Peter
 King, and
 others.

there being scarce a particular Subject in the whole Discourse, on which I have not consulted (I believe I may say) near Twenty of the best Writers I cou'd meet with upon it; tho' I have not always thought my self oblig'd to keep to their manner of Expression; nor servilely to follow them in all they advance.

And yet after all, I am sensible there are Faults discernible enough, even by Men who are no great Criticks; and those I claim as my own; and give the Reader liberty to blame me as much as he pleases for them. But then I hope he will be so kind to himself, as to make a good Use of what is undoubtedly Good and Useful, and of great Importance to him. Which I heartily pray God he may do, and I desire no more.



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DEVOT



hns, yd, berped aid to U idgin a pution

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do with it, and it is a pution

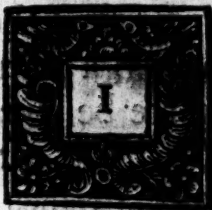
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COMPANION

FOR THE

Lord's-Day.

The Introduction.



It is none of my Design to enter into a nice Disquisition of the several *Controversies*, with which this Subject hath been perplex'd. This hath been done by many Learned Pens; several of which have made more Knots than they have untied; and instead of *enlight'ning* what is *dark*, have *obscured* the most *plain*, and *manifest* Truth. And these Disputes have had an ill Influence upon Christian Piety, and Devotion: They have hindred many well-meaning People from

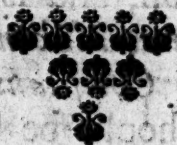
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making

making a right Use of this Sacred Day, and given Occasion to many very wicked Ones, not only to neglect the Worship and Service of God upon it, but to spend it in downright Riot and Prophaneness. 'Tis true, we do not now find any Reason to complain of *these* as the Cause of that general Neglect of this Day, which is so evident among us, if we look only to our own Times; for (God be thanked!) they have been buried long ago. But we have too much Reason to think that the Disputes in our Fathers Days, have had a very malignant Influence upon ours. The needless Severity of some, and the prophane License of others, (which ended in the *Book of Sports*, or a Declaration for the Lawfulness of Sports and Pastimes on the Lord's-Day) gave the Nation such a Tincture of Irreligion, as will scarce be ever purg'd out. The Duty of a Christian certainly lies between these two Extremes; We are not to tie our selves up to a Judaical and scrupulous Strictness on the one hand; nor give loose Reins to Libertinism on the other. For 'tis certain, that if the greater Part of Mankind are not kept to a Religious Observance of this Day, they will not find Time for the Exercises of Piety all the rest of the Week; and therefore



fore this ought to be look'd to as the great Instrument of Preserving and Cultivating Religion in the World ; which will wear out when the Observance of it comes to be neglected : And tho' the Excess of Judaizing ought to be restrain'd ; yet the Excess of Libertinism, as it is the more Common, so it is the more Dangerous : And therefore as the *Fourth Commandment* begins with the Charge REMEMBER, so we ought frequently to be put in Mind to keep it *Holy*. In pursuit of this Design, I intend to vindicate the Piety of the *Lord's-Day*, by shewing briefly the Foundations upon which it is built ; to shew wherein the Sanctification of it does consist ; and to point out some of those Practices which seem inconsistent with it : Under which Heads will be comprehended all that is necessary, on this Subject.



CHAP. I.
 Containing the Reasons why Christians
 should keep Holy the First Day of
 the Week as the Christian Sabbath,
 and spend it in a Pious and Religi-
 ous Manner.

BEING to represent the Reasons
 of our Sanctification of the
 Lord's Day, I shall proceed by
 these Steps and Degrees.

I. SINCE God gives us our Time, it
 is a *Moral Duty* that we should consecrate
 and set apart some Portion of it for his
 immediate Service. It is a known Dictate
 of Natural Reason, and as such universally
 practis'd by *Jews, Mahometans, and Hea-*
thens, as well as *Christians*, that some Por-
 tion of Time should be set apart for Rest
 and Publick Devotion. God is to be pub-
 lickly Worshipped as well as in private; by
 a Community, a Society, as well as by par-
 ticular Persons. And this Publick Wor-
 ship

ship cannot be perform'd without the Circumstances of *Time* and *Place*. As there must be some Publick Place in which the Worshippers are to meet; so it is no less Necessary that there should be some certain Time for such Religious Assemblies.

'Tis true, all Time in it self is alike; none is more Holy than another; but since our Bodies require much of our Time and Labour, those Impressions that Religion raises wou'd soon grow feeble, and wear out, if they were not often awaken'd in us by such Meditations and Exercises as do feed and strengthen them: So that it seems necessary that there must be some stated Times for *these*; and such a Cessation from Labour as may give Leisure, and Freedom of Thought, for the Business of Religion. This must be general, otherwise the Affairs of some might fall cross to the Retirements of others; and therefore the Time for these Exercises must be fix'd by a general Law to all Men. And the Intervals between those Times ought not to be either too long or too short. If they were too short, they might take up too much Time; so that enough would not be left for Labour, and the Necessities of Life; and if they were too long, the Force of Religious Exercises would be too much weaken'd before they were again revived.

IN all this there are visible Grounds of *Morality*; but whether a whole Day, or only some Part of it; or whether a *sixth*, a *seventh* or *eighth* Day ought to be the Measure of the Return of the Time for the Publick Exercises of Religion, could only be settled by the Authority of the great Lawgiver, who best knows the Nature of Man; and what he is capable of; and what is most fit and proper for him. The *Matter* of this Law is built on sure Grounds of *Morality*; but the determinate Measure of the Time arises from the Will of God, and from the Law that he has given. And accordingly,

2. GOD, who knows best what Portion of our Time is fit to be peculiarly dedicated to his Service, that the Morality of that Time might be determin'd to some Certainty, hath by his express Precept given to the *Jews*, limited *one Day of seven* to be that special Portion of Time which he wou'd have employ'd in the immediate Acts and Services of Religion. Thus in the Fourth Commandment, *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it Holy: six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.* The Number of *seventh* is here to be understood in reference to a *proportion*, rather

rather than the Order of Time; and principally imports, that one Day in seven, after six Days Labour, ought to be observ'd in a Holy Manner. And yet,

3. THIS seventh Portion of Time under the Old Law given to the *Jews*, seems plainly determin'd by the Precept and Command of God, to the seventh Day from the Creation, in Commemoration of the Great Work of the Creation; from which GOD Rested on the Seventh Day: And in Memory of their Deliverance from the *Egyptians*, by God's over-whelming *Pharaoh* and all his Host in the Red Sea, on the Morning of the seventh Day; which is therefore (in *Deut. 5. 15.*) made another Reason for their Observing the Sabbath-Day.

4. BUT since the Christian Religion hath put an End to the whole *Jewish* Polity, to all those Laws that related to their History and Constitution, we Christians are not obliged to the precise Observation of the Seventh Day: That Sabbath, as all other *Jewish* Institutions, was abolish'd by the Coming of Christ; as may be seen *Coloss. 2. 16. Gal. 4. 10.* Yet nevertheless,

5. THE Equity of the Fourth Commandment doth thus far oblige us Christi-

ans ; that the Time set apart for Publick Devotion, shou'd not be less than one Day in seven. And,

6. **THE First Day of the Week, or the Lord's Day,** is, by Positive Institution, to be observ'd by us as the Christian Sabbath. For as the Seventh-day Sabbath was Originally Instituted in Honour of the Great Maker of all Things, who finish'd the Creation of the World in Six Days, and rested the Seventh ; so it was chang'd to the First Day of the Week in Remembrance of the Work of our Redemption, which is a Second Creation ; in some respect superior to the First ; and in Memory of the Completion of it, by the Resurrection of our Saviour, upon it, from the Dead.

AND tho' some have affirm'd that this *Change* from the *Seventh*, to the *First Day* of the Week, stands upon no other Foundation than a meer *Human, or Ecclesiastical* Constitution ; yet I doubt not but it will appear to be made by Him, who is *Lord of the Sabbath*, even *Jesus Christ* Himself ; if the following Considerations be attended to. As,

1. It is confess'd by all Christians, that our Lord not only rose from the Dead the first Day of the Week, but has himself given

ven us an Example of a particular Regard to it. He not only honour'd it with the stupendious Miracle of his Resurrection; but also with his strange Appearances afterwards to *Mary Magdalen*, and the other Women—Then to the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, and his Religious assembling with them there—After that to the Disciples at *Jerusalem*, and assembling with them the same Day; and the whole time of those Assemblies, we find, employ'd in Religious Exercises; Preaching, celebrating the Sacrament, Instructing, Blessing his Disciples, and giving the Commission for Preaching the Gospel, and Planting the Christian Church.

2. It is farther certain, that the Apostles appointed, and the Christian Churches observ'd their Assemblies, and Communion, ordinarily on this Day: And that these Apostles were fill'd with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, that they might infallibly acquaint the Church with the Doctrine and Will of Jesus Christ, and leave it on Record for succeeding Ages; and so were intrusted by Office, and enabled by Gifts, to settle the Orders of the Gospel-Church, as *Moses* did the Matters of the Tabernacle and Worship under the Law; and so, that their Laws and Orders,

thus

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*This is fully
made out in
L'Estrange
his Vindica-
tion of God's
Sabbath.
Printed
An. 1641.*

† *Judge
Hales.*

thus settled, were the Laws or Orders of the Holy Ghost. Christ gave his Apostles Commission to acquaint the World with his Will, and to settle the Orders of his Church; and in order to this, promis'd and gave them the Conduct of the Holy Spirit, who is therefore the Author of what they did in pursuance of their Commission. They delivered and enjoin'd nothing but what they received from Christ, either by *Voice* or *Instinct*, (which is fitly call'd by a learned Man † the *Secret Message of the Spirit to them*.) Now since they did deliver and enjoin this Day to be kept as a Day of Publick Worship and Devotion, it can be esteem'd of no less than Divine Appointment and Institution.

THAT the Apostles and first Christians did constantly observe this Day as the stated Time for their publick and more solemn Worship, is evident from the whole Tenor of their History. Whatever they might do at other times, yet there are many Passages of Scripture that intimate the *first* Day of the Week, to be their more solemn Time of meeting. On the first Day of the Week *Ast. 2. 1.* the Apostles were Assembled, when the Holy Ghost came down so visibly upon them for the Conversion of the World. On this Day we find St. Paul preaching at *Treas,*

Troas, when the Disciples came together to break Bread, or to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Finally, this Day was observ'd at *Troas*, *Corinth*, and in the Churches of *Galatia*, not once only, but as a thing of Course: And so presum'd by *St. Paul*, giving Directions concerning a Collection for the Saints to be made Weekly on that Day; which evidently regards their Religious Assemblies upon it. And we have no Reason to suspect, but that in other Churches also, the same Custom prevail'd.

Act. 20. 7.

1 Cor. 16.

2.

3. 'Tis very probable that *St. John* intended to intimate this, when he call'd it the LORD'S-DAY, in Contradistinction to the *Jewish Sabbath*, which was a Name peculiar to the *Jews Seventh Day*. It was in his time the Christians Day of Holy Worship, observ'd in Commemoration of Christ's Resurrection from the Dead: And therefore when he is speaking of the Transporting Rapture he was in by the Spirit; and wou'd tell us at what time it was, he says, *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day*, that is, on the first Day of the Week, commonly call'd by the Church, and very well known to all Christians by the Name of the *Lords-Day*.

Rev. 1. 10.

AND this Title is an Argument of it self, of great weight, to prove its Divine Institu—

nstitution ; for whatsoever in Holy Scripture is said to be *the Lord's* denominatively, of that Christ is the Author and Institutor. As for instance, the *Lord's Supper*, because he instituted it : The *People of the Lord*, because he chuses them : The *Lord's Messengers*, because he sends them. Upon the same ground, the first Day of the Week is denominatively call'd the *Lord's Day* ; and that not by *Creation*, for so every Day is the Lord's from the beginning ; but by *Divine Institution*, because it was Instituted by Christ the Lord, for Divine Worship and Service, and for the Memorial of the great Work of Redemption, wrought by him. And so the Learned Bishop *Andrews* observes, (as I find him quoted by another very Learned Person *). As the Eucharist is call'd the *Lord's Supper*, because he Instituted it ; for the same Reason is the *Sunday* denominated the *Lord's-Day*. For these two, the *Day*, and the *Supper*, have the Epithet in Scripture, to shew, that *Dominicum* is alike to be taken in both.

4. LET us consider in the next place, that the first Day of the Week hath been kept Holy, as of Apostolical Ordination and Appointment, by the universal Church, ever since the Apostles days. Such a universal Regard has this Day found among
all

* Hamond
L'Estrange
Sabbath
vindicated,
p. 94.

all who own'd the Name of Christians, that a Person well vers'd in Church History assures us, that he could not remember either any Orthodox Christian, or *Heretick*, that ever oppos'd, question'd, or scrupled it, till of late Ages.

WE are not indeed to take our Faith from Antiquity only; but this, as to the Case of Fact, is a clear proof that it was settled by the Apostles; and so is a fuller Exposition of Scripture concerning its Institution.

IGNATIUS (who lived in *St. John's* time) in one of his Epistles says, Let every Lover of Christ celebrate the Lord's-Day, the Queen and Principal of all Days, on which Christ our Life rose from the Dead, and Death was vanquish'd by him. *Justin Martyr* in his Apology tells us, That Christians assembled together on *Sunday*, because it was the first Day of the Week, on which God, out of the confused Chaos, made the World, and Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the Dead; and he shews how they spent it in Publick Worship, in Reading, Preaching, Praying, and Sacraments, &c. This, doubtless, *Pliny* meant, when giving *Trajan* an Account of the Christians, he tells him, that they were wont to meet together to Worship Christ, upon a *set-certain Day*; by which he can't reasonably

reasonably be understood to mean any other, but the Lord's Day. This Day being the Lord's Day we keep Holy, says *Dionysius*, in his Letter to the Roman Church. *Clement Alexandrinus* calls it the Chief of Days; and adds, that the true Christian, according to the Command of the Gospel, observes the Lord's Day, by casting out all evil Thoughts, and entertaining all good ones, glorifying the Resurrection of the Lord on that Day. *St. Barnabas* says, we observe the eighth Day with gladness, in which Jesus rose from the dead, and manifested himself to his Disciples. And *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, hath these words, Both Custom and Reason require that we should honour the Lord's Day, and keep it Festively, seeing it was on that Day that our Lord Jesus Christ completed our Redemption, by his Resurrection from the Dead. And to the same purpose *Origen* adviseth his Hearers to Pray unto Almighty God, especially on the Lord's Day, which is a Commemoration of Christ's Passion; for the Resurrection of Christ (says he) is not only celebrated once a Year, but every seven days. To all which, tho' I might easily heap together many more, I'll only add *St. Augustine*, who tells us, That the Lord's Day was declared to the Church

Church by the Resurrection of the Lord upon that Day, and by Christ it was first Ordain'd to be kept Holy. And again, The Apostles appointed the Lord's Day to be kept Holy with all Religious Solemnity, because upon it our Redeemer rose from the Dead.

AND this being not only the Day of Christ's Resurrection, but also devoted to his Honour, as a Time Instituted by him; hence it was in the Primitive Church generally call'd the LORD'S - DAY, which Denomination a learned Person tells us it most usually bears in the Writings both of the Greek and Latin Fathers; tho' sometimes it is simply call'd the LORD'S, without the addition of the word DAY, as it is express'd by *Ignatius*, and *Cyprian*; and sometimes too in compliance with the Heathens, to the end they might know what Day was meant by it, they call'd it in their Phrase *Sunday*, being so nam'd by them, because it was dedicated to the Sun. This Appellation is given to it both by *Justin Martyr*, and *Tertullian* in their Apologies which they wrote to the Heathen; and thus also it is generally stiled in the Edicts of the first Christian Emperors.

BUT tho' they so far comply'd with the Heathens as to call this Day *Sunday*, yet
(says

† Account of the Worship and Ceremonies of the Prim. Church, ch. 7. §. 10. (says Sir Peter King †) they never so far indulged the Jews, as to call it the Sabbath-Day; for thro' all their Writings, as may be especially seen in *Tertullian* and *Justin Martyr*, they violently declaim'd against Sabbatizing, or keeping the Sabbath-day, that is, the Judaical Observation of the Seventh Day.

So that the LORD'S DAY was the common and ordinary Title of this Blessed and Glorious Day. But tho' 'tis pity we shou'd deprive it of any Part of that Honour, (tho' it be only in the Name) which is its due; yet the Question is not so much of the Name, as of the Thing: It may be call'd the *Christian Sabbath*, by *Allusion*, as we use the Names *Sacrifice* and *Altar*; And it may be call'd *Sunday*, as being that which is most in use. The main Point of all is to spend it in a Holy and Religious Manner; and if we take care to do this, it is scarce worth contending about the Name.

I SHALL sum up what I have offered on this Subject, in the Words of the Learned *Junius*; "Wherefore seeing (*saieth he*)
 "the Lord's Day is by the Fact of Christ,
 "(viz. his Resurrection, and often appearing to his Disciples upon that Day)
 "by the Example and Institution of the
 "Apo-

“ Apostles, and by the continual Practice
 “ of the Ancient Church, and by the Te-
 “ stimony of Scripture, observed and Sub-
 “ stituted into the Place of the *Jewish Sab-*
 “ bath; they do vainly who say that the
 “ Observation of the Lord's-Day is of Tra-
 “ dition, and not from the Scripture, &c.

To all which Evidence I shall only beg
 leave to add the Suffrage of the Church of
England; and the rather, because some
 Persons who pretend a mighty Zeal for it,
 do not seem to have that due Regard and
 Veneration for the Authority and Solemn-
 nity of this Day, which the Church ex-
 pects, and requires. That the Authority
 which sets apart this Day for the Solemn-
 nities of Religious Worship, is not, in the
 Esteem of the Church of *England*, meerly
Human or *Ecclesiastical* (as some have con-
 tended) but as truly *Divine* as the appoint-
 ment of the *Lord's Supper*, and *Baptism*,
 is justly affirm'd by the most Reverend and
 Learned Archbishop *Usher* † from a Pas-
 sage in the *Homilies*, which declares, *That*
in the Fourth Commandment God hath gi-
ven express Charge to all Men, that upon
the Sabbath-day, which is now our Sunday,
they should cease from all Weekly and Work-
day Labour, to the intent that like as God

† Judg-
 ment of the
 Primate of
 Ireland,
 &c. p. 106.

C

himself

himself wrought six days, and rested the seventh, blessed and sanctified it, and consecrated it to Rest and Quietness from Labour, even so God's Obedient People shou'd use the Sunday holily, and rest from their common and daily Labours, and also give themselves wholly to heavenly Exercises of God's true Religion and Service *.

* Homily
concerning
the Place
and Time of
Prayer.

AND as a farther Evidence of this, we may observe that the Church has requir'd a solemn Humiliation before God, for the Prophanation of this Day, as well as for Murder, Adultery, or any other immoral Act; as we find in our Liturgy, where after the Rehearsal of the Fourth Commandment, we are requir'd to implore Forgiveness of God for all that we have done contrary to this holy Law of his; and to pray that he wou'd give us his Grace, that we may never commit any such Enormity for the future; in those Words, *Lord have Mercy upon us, and incline our Hearts to keep this Law.*

THUS has the Church asserted the Divine Institution of this Day, and taken care at the same time, that it be observ'd by all her Members, in a Religious Manner. Which is yet more expressly provided for, by the XIIIth Canon, where we are told, That all manner of Persons within the Church of England,

land, shall celebrate and keep the Lord's-Day, commonly call'd Sunday—according to God's Will and Pleasure, and the Orders of the Church of England prescribed in that behalf, that is, in hearing the Word of God read and taught; in private and publick Prayers; in acknowledging their Offences to God, and amendment of the same; in reconciling themselves charitably to their Neighbours, where Displeasures have been; and oftentimes receiving the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ; in visiting of the poor and sick, using all godly and sober Conversation.

AND this has been the manner of the Church of England, from the very beginning of the Reformation. Bishop Burnet tells us †, That our first Reformers gave a Charge for the strict Observation of the Lord's-Day, which was appointed to be spent wholly in the Worship of God; and to be all employ'd in the Duties of Religion, or in Works of Charity. And this was enforc'd by the Civil Authority, as well as Ecclesiastical Injunctions. There's a Law as old as the Vth Year of Edward VI. which requires that Christians on all Holy-Days, and Times appointed, shou'd apply themselves only, and wholly unto Holy Works, properly appertaining unto true

† Abridg-
ment of the
Hist. of the
Reformati-
on, p. 291.

Religion, and that such Times be dedicated wholly unto God, and his Worship, and separated from all Prophane Uses.

So that nothing can be plainer than that the Church of *England* accounts the *Authority* which instituted this Day, to be no less than *Divine*; and that it is the Duty of all Christians to pay the same regard to it, which they do to the other of GOD's *Commandments*. And therefore I cannot see how Men can with any tolerable Reason put in their claim for the Character of CHURCH-MEN, and that of a *higher* Form than their Brethren, who put a manifest slight upon a Duty so much commended, and enjoyn'd by all the Authority of *Church and State*; as well as the express Command of God himself.

THUS have I made it appear, that by the Institution of our Saviour manifested by the Ordination of the Apostles, and the uniform Consent of Antiquity, and the Practice of the Universal Church in all Ages, as well as of our own, the first Day of the Week is to be observ'd by Christians, in a Holy and Religious manner.

AND now having seen the *Divine* Institution of the Lord's Day, and the Obligations we lye under to observe it in a Holy manner, let us next consider the Reasonableness

bleness, and Advantages of doing so. For this (no more than the other of God's Commandments) is not an Arbitrary Constitution, a meer instance of Sovereign Will and Pleasure, but one of those excellent Rules which the Wisdom of Heaven hath contriv'd to promote our Interest, and advance our Happiness.

I. LET us reflect on the *Reasonableness* of this Duty, in that God affords us such a liberal Portion of Time, for the Affairs and Business of this present Life, and reserves so small a part for himself; when all is his own, and he might have demanded the whole from us. And therefore had it been left to our own Choice, we could not in Justice have allotted less than the *seventh* part of our Time, especially since we hope shortly to dedicate the whole of an Eternity to God's Service. And he that thinks this too much for God, is, doubtless, for allowing him, by his good-will, none at all. But can we be so stupid as to bestow the whole Week on our selves, and not offer in Gratitude one Day unto God; who bestows upon us all we have at present, and will hereafter give us more than we can hope! God is worthy of all our Time, he deserves the uninterrupted Praises of all his Creatures. Every Moment of our Life is

bound to bless him, since every Moment subsists by his Goodness. Let us therefore, faithfully and gratefully observe our Duty, and render exactly the Tribute we owe to that *Benign Being*, who tho' he has a Right to all we have, yet accepts such slender Payment as our Poverty affords; whose Bounty grants so liberally to us, and retains so small a part for himself; that so spending *His Day* to his Honour, we may end our *own* in his Favour, which is better than Life.

2. LET us consider the Advantages of a serious regard to this Duty. Tho' this Day is call'd the *Lord's-Day*, yet all the Advantages of it are our *own*. His Goodness friendly bears the Name, but intends for us all the Profit of the Day. As when the Harvest Sun provides a Cloud, and seems to retire and rest his wearied Beams, he does not seek to save the Journey of his Light, but only spares the Reapers Head: In like manner, our gracious God (who made the Sun the Shadow of his Glory, and inspires all Creatures to represent his Bounty) does not seek by the reserve of a Day, to procure his own Repose: 'Tis not to increase his own Eternity that he takes a Portion of our Time; but only to promote our Happiness, and
advance

advance our Interest. Happy it is for us, that there is such a Time Weekly returning to take us off from our worldly business, and to give us an opportunity of attending the Service of God, which is in self perfect Freedom, and is always attended with the richest Blessings. We have great Reason to bless God for giving us such a merciful Release from the Labours of our Bodies, and the Cares of our Minds, and affording us Time and Means to promote our greatest and best Interest. Alas! We are so intent and busy upon the World, that if there were not some such time appointed to our Hands, it is to be feared we should scarce allot any to our selves, but shou'd forget God our *Maker and Redeemer days without number*, and *die* as stupidly as we *liv'd*.

It is therefore for most wise Reasons that God hath appointed this Day as essential and necessary to the Improvement of our Souls. For if we look into the World, and consider how apt Men are to be engag'd to it, and forget their eternal Home, we shall soon be convinc'd, that one Day in seven is as little as can be, to revive and maintain in their Souls a true Sense of things. The truth is, it seems impossible

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for

for a Man to be sav'd without sanctifying one Day in seven; I mean in the ordinary course of living. Less than this will not keep their Minds above Sin and the World, and preserve in them any tolerable Sense of Religion, and another World. And therefore God who knows our Frame, how earthly and carnal we are; how strongly we are inclin'd to outward sensual Enjoyments, hath shewn a great Regard to our Happiness, in setting a-part this Season, wherein we are to sequester our selves from all worldly Business; to consider Eternity, and the Concerns of our Souls: And we cannot employ it to any other purposes, without neglecting our *Interest* as well as our *Duty*.

AND for this Reason it is, that in the *Fourth* Commandment we are charg'd to REMEMBER this Duty, as being of the greatest Consequence to us; for indeed this is a good Security to the due Observation of all the rest of God's Commandments. And while Men make Conscience of keeping Holy the Lord's Day, there is probability they will grow better thereby, however, some Security that they will not grow worse. But in prophaning this Day, they let in a deluge of Vice, which seldom stops, before it ends in Ruin.

So

So that (to use the Words of the late Reverend Archbishop of *York*) If there were nothing of a Divine Commandment for the setting a-part this Day for Religious Uses (which yet I believe, and have prov'd there is) yet it is one of the most prudent and useful Constitutions that ever was made. So that upon that account all Men that have any Honour for God, or Zeal for the Publick Good, should think themselves oblig'd to observe it.

THE Benefits of it are indeed unspeakable; not to mention the Civil or Temporal Conveniences of it, in truth to the keeping up the Religion of this Day, we owe in a great measure, that the very Face of Christianity hath hitherto been preserv'd among us. And were it not for this, for any thing I know, most of us in a few Years wou'd become little better than Heathens and Barbarians.

NAY, were it not for this, I know not whether a great many among us wou'd not become *Hottentotes* as well as *Heathens*. For (as a very Ingenious Gentleman expresses it †) "If keeping Holy this Day
" were only a human Institution, it wou'd
" be the best means that cou'd have been
" thought of for the Polishing and Civi-
" lizing of Mankind. It is certain, the Coun-
trety

† *Spectator*,
No. 112.

they People wou'd soon degenerate into a kind of Savages and Barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated Time, in which the whole Village meet together with their best Faces, and in their cleanliest Habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent Subjects, hear their Duties explain'd to 'em, and join together in Adoration of the Supreme Being.

3. LET us reflect on the Encouragement God himself gives us, in that he hath *blest* the Seventh Day, as well as *Hallowed* it: It is a Day particularly blessed, and designed for a Blessing to us. The Lord Blessed the Seventh Day to the Purposes of Piety and Spiritual Benefit of his People; *yea and it shall be blessed*. This is the appointed Day of Blessings above all others, on which Divine Comforts are dispens'd, for the prosperous Subsistence both of our *Souls* and *Bodies*, on the other Days.

1. THIS is a Day of Blessing to the SOUL, by calling it out of the hurry of worldly Business and Concerns, to Spiritual and Holy Employments, that tend to refine and improve its Capacities, to recover it from Sense and Sin, and exalt it to a more near Similitude, and Union with its Maker.

FOR

FOR which End, Holy Ordinances are more freely dispensed, and fill'd with the Effusions of God's Spirit, and the Grace of his more immediate Presence; and a greater proportion of God's Spiritual Blessings from him, may (as Bishop *Hopkins* observes) with a more confident Faith be expected, when both the Ordinances and the Day too are GOD's, than when tho' the Ordinances be his, yet the Day is ours.

THE Day is Blessed, and whatever we offer up to our God upon it, will have a double Acceptance; and whatever good thing we desire, will receive a speedy Answer. This is the acceptable Time in which God will hear us: This is the Lord's own Day which he hath Blessed, and in which he will bless us, according to his Promise,

Only take heed that thou keep the Covenant of the Lord, and sanctify this his-day: Then will thy God bring thee to his holy Mountain, and make thee joyful in his House of Prayer; thy Burnt-offerings and thy Sacrifices shall be accepted on his holy Altar. Isa. 56.6,7.

Our Devotions and Services shall be accepted this Day more especially, thro' the Mediator of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus.

2. THE due Observance of this Day is a proper means to procure God's Blessing

Blessing upon the Secular Labours and Business of our six Days, which we can never expect should be prosperous, if we are negligent of *God's Time*. For how can we expect *God's Blessing* upon a Week so ill begun, with a Neglect or Abuse of *God's first Day*. And therefore if we become unprosperous in the World; if Losses, Troubles, or Dangers befall us, let us reflect how we have spent the *Lord's-Day*; whether we have not wholly neglected it, or abused it in Riot, or made it a Day for taking Journeys, for more private Business, and less scandalous Labours, as the Custom of too many is. We have the Testimony of a great and good Man (*Judge Hales*) that the serious Observation, or Neglect of this Day, always had an influence on the Affairs of all the rest of the Week. " I
 " have found (saith he †) by a strict and
 " diligent Observation, that the due Ob-
 " servation of the Duty of this Day hath
 " ever had join'd to it a Blessing on the
 " rest of my time; and the Week that
 " hath been so begun, hath been Blessed
 " and Prosperous to me; and on the other
 " side, when I have been negligent of the
 " Duties of this Day, the rest of the Week
 " hath been unsuccessful and unhappy to
 " my own Secular Employments: So that
 I could

† *Meditations*, p. 260.


" I could easily make an Estimate of my
 " Successes in my own Secular Employ-
 " ments the Week following, by the man-
 " ner of my passing of this Day. And this
 " I do not write lightly or inconsiderately,
 " but upon *long* and sound *Observation* and
 " *Experience* ". And the truth is, the
 / God that cannot lie, hath promis'd his
 Blessing even to the worldly Employ-
 ments of those who pay a due Regard to
 this Holy Day. *If thou turn thy foot from* Isa. 58.13,
the Sabbath, from doing thine own pleasure 14.
on my holy Day, and call the Sabbath a de-
light, the holy of the Lord honourable, and
shalt honour him; not doing thine own ways,
nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking
thine own words; then shalt thou delight
thy self in the Lord; and I will cause thee
to ride upon the high Mountains of the
earth, and feed thee with the heritage of
Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the
Lord hath spoken it.

So that upon all these Accounts we are
 obliged to Remember the Lord's-Day to keep
 it Holy; because if we forget this, we re-
 member nothing either of our own Duty or
 Interest.



C H A P II.

Shewing wherein the Sanctification of the LORD's - DAY does consist; and in what manner Christians are to employ themselves upon it.

OW, in order to state clearly wherein the Sanctification of this Day does consist, we are to observe that to *Sanctify*, to *Hallow*, or keep *Holy* a Day, signifies the separating and setting it a-part from common and prophane, to *Holy* and *Sacred* Uses; so that the Sanctifying the *Lord's - Day*, lies plainly in our sequestering our selves from common Affairs, Business, Employments, and Recreations, and employing our selves in those Spiritual Exercises which he hath requir'd us to be conversant about on that Day; such as are, particularly, Prayer, and Praise, receiving the Holy Sacrament, and all the other *Publick*, *Private*, and *Secret* Exercises of Religion.

GOD prohibits our Attendance on the common and servile Works of our ordinary Callings

Callings and Vocations ; not that Rest and Cessation is in it self acceptable to Him, or any part of his Worship and Service ; but only because worldly and earthly Employments are an Impediment and Distraction to that heavenly Frame of Spirit which we ought to maintain in all the Parts and Duties of this Day. The Works of our Callings are not Evil in themselves, but Lawful and Good ; and such wherein on other days we serve God, and may expect a Blessing from him. But yet our Mind is so narrow and stinted, that we cannot at once attend them, and the Service of God, with that Zeal and Fervour that he requires ; and therefore that we may be wholly employ'd in his Work, he hath taken us off from our own.

IN order to do this the more effectually, and to serve some other wise Ends of his Providence, the *Jews* were under the most strict and rigorous Prohibition of bodily Labour, and secular Employments. They were not permitted so much as to gather Sticks, or to go from their places of Abode to provide themselves Food on the Sabbath-day ; yea so strictly were they tied to the Observation of it, that they might not so much as kindle a Fire ; *ye shall kindle no fire throughout your Habitations on the Sabbath-day.* And there have been some who

Numb. 15.

32.

Exod. 16.

29.

Exod. 35.

3.

who wou'd extend these Prohibitions to *Christians*, and fancy that we are oblig'd to the punctual Observance of them, as the *Jews* were ; or at least they have grafted upon them several unnecessary Rigours of their own devising, which they bind upon other People ; and for which they value themselves.

BUT as we are not to fall into a careless Neglect of this Holy-Day ; so shou'd we be careful to avoid the other extreme, which turns the Holy Observation of the Day into a ceremonious Abstinence from lawful Things, and censures those as ungodly, that are not of the same Mind, and forbear not such things as well as they. There is nothing more remarkable than the difference between *Christ* and the *Pharisees* in this Point ; much of their Contention with him was about the Observation of the Sabbath. They were mightily offended with his Disciples for rubbing out Corn to eat on the Sabbath-Day ; and with Him, because he healed on the Sabbath, and bad the healed Man, *Take up his Bed and walk* : And they said there are six Days on which Men ought to Work ; they might come and be healed on them. A great deal of this is to be met with in the Gospels. And a Man that is of their Spirit will be apt to think

think, that the *Pharisees* were in the right: No doubt but Christ might, if he had pleased, have chosen another Day to Heal on; but he knew that the Works which most declared the Power of God, and honour'd him before all, and confirm'd the Gospel, were fittest for the Sabbath-day; and that (as he tells them) *the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath*; that is, that this Precept is not so entirely Moral, that Men are bound to it any other way, but as it tends to the Advancement of Religion, and the good of Mankind. We are therefore to take care of the *Pharisees Ceremoniousness, and Censoriousness*. If we see a Man walking abroad on the *Lord's-Day*, we are not to censure him till we know that he does it from Prophaneness or Negligence. We know not but it may be necessary to his Health, or that he may chuse it as a Help and Advantage to Holy Meditation. If we hear some speak a word more than we think needful of common things, or do more about Cloathing, and providing for their Meals than we think proper; we must not *censure* them, tho' we need not *imitate* 'em. A Scrupulousness about such outward Observances, when the Holy Duties of the Day are not hindred or neglected, and a Censoriousness

towards those who are not as *Scrupulous*, is too *Pharisaical* and *Ceremonious* a Religion, for *Spiritual* and *Charitable* Christians.

THIS is certain: We are not bound to any such *Niceties* and *Punctilio's* by that Law of God given to the *Jews*; the *Ceremonial* and *Positive* Part of which, we are set free from, by that *Liberty* which *Jesus Christ* hath purchas'd for, and conferr'd upon his Church. We Christians are bound to nothing by the Law of *Moses*, but what was of *Moral* and *Natural* Right in that Law. We do not celebrate the *Lord's-Day* it self upon any *Obligation* laid upon us by the *Letter* of the *Fourth Commandment* (for that enjoins the *seventh* Day from the *Creation*, whereas ours is the *eighth*) but only from the *Analogy* and *Proportion* of *Moral Reason*; which requires, that a due and convenient *Portion* of our *Time* shou'd be separated to the *Service* and *Worship* of God. But for the fixing of the very Day, why it shou'd be this rather than any other, we acknowledge it to proceed from the *Consecration* of it by our *Saviour's Resurrection*, the *Institution* of the *Apostles*, and the consequent *Practice* of the *Universal Church*, as I have shewn in the first Chapter.

THE

THE Lord's-Day therefore is to be observ'd as the Sabbath among the *Jews*, only in things that are in themselves Moral and Rational: Nor will this give any Scope to the Libertinism of those who would willingly indulge themselves either in worldly Affairs, or loose Recreations on this Day. For it is Moral and Rational that the whole of that Day which is set apart for the Worship of God, should be employ'd in his Worship. This is likewise Moral, and of perpetual Obligation, that we shou'd abstain from all such things as might steal away our Thoughts and Affections from God, or indispose us to his Spiritual Worship and Service.

UPON the whole, we see that the Sanctification of the *Lord's-Day* consists in two things, something *Positive*, and something *Negative*. The Positive part of the Duty is the main, *viz.* that we be devoutly engag'd in God's Holy Worship and Service; and the Negative part, our abstaining from all other Labours, Recreations, Thoughts, and Words, is so far our Duty, as they are any Hindrance and Impediment to this Holy Work; and were not enjoin'd upon a meer Ceremonial Account.

THIS is a general Account of the Duty incumbent on us, upon the *Lord's-Day*;

every one of which, I shall enlarge on, in the following Chapters, under their several Heads.



C H A P. III.

Of the Duties of Masters of Families on the Lords-Day.

THOSE who are Masters and Heads of Families, stand charg'd in the Fourth Commandment, not only with their own *single* Duty, but with that of all their Family, their Sons and Daughters, their Servants and Sojourners with them. And therefore they cannot *connive* at or suffer, much less *countenance* them in any Prophanation of this Holy-Day, without Breach of their Trust, and the Guilt not only of Impiety, but Injustice, and Unfaithfulness to God. Nor is it sufficient that they do not suffer their Dependants to Prophane this Holy Day; they must take care (so far as they are able) that they sanctify it, by a faithful discharge of all those Duties that are then requir'd of 'em. They shou'd oblige their

their Children and Servants to perform the secret Duties of Religion; and to accompany them to the publick Worship. They must both in the Morning and Evening of the Lord's-Day (as they have time) read the Holy Scriptures, and other good Books for their Instruction; and offer up their solemn Prayers and Praises to God with them. And in these Holy Exercises they shou'd oblige their whole Family to join, not suffering any Person to be absent, but upon the most urgent Occasion. They shou'd Beware how they suffer their Children and Servants to wander abroad, and be out of their Houses, for this Day; for by this Way many of them are undone.

THOSE who have Families cannot better employ Part of that Time, vacant from Publick Worship, than in this manner; in seeing that those who are under their Charge spend their time in Holy Exercises, either reading the Scripture, or giving an Account of what Truths they have been taught; or joining with them in Praises and Prayer unto God; or indeed in all these in their several courses and order, as their Time will allow.

AND this is the way to draw down the Blessing of God upon them and their Families; and to make Religion and Virrue

thrive in them: For common Observation tells us, that where the Lord's Day is most regarded, Knowledge and Religion prosper best; and consequently this is a Natural and Moral Means of Prosperity; as it makes the best Children and Servants; as well as by the Favour and Blessing of God, who has promis'd that *them that honour him, he will honour.*



CHAPTER IV.

Of the Reasonableness of joining in the Publick Worship of God, as perform'd in the Church of England.

BECAUSE Publick Worship is the Principal of those Duties by which we sanctify the Lord's Day; and the Directions in the following Chapters, are adapted for the Use of such as attend upon our Publick Service; I thought it proper in the first place, to recommend it to our Esteem, by shewing how excellently it is fram'd to promote Christian Piety and Devotion; and the Unreasonableness of forsaking it, upon the Pretence of better Edification.

THE

THE Publick Worship of God hath ever been accounted the indispensable proper Employment of a Sabbath. We are told, that *Moses of old time bath in every City them who preach him, being read in the Synagogue every Sabbath-day.* And upon the first day of the Week (we also read) when the Disciples came together to break Bread, or receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, *Paul preach'd unto them.* And on this Day it was that they being met together, our Saviour first appear'd to them after his Resurrection for two Lord's-Days together.

Act. 15. 21.

20. 7.

AND thus Publick Worship continu'd to be the main Work of the Lord's-Day, in the succeeding Ages of the Church. It appears from *Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Pliny,* and others, that upon the first Day of the Week the Christians met together for the solemn Exercises of Religion. They had their Publick Meetings on this Day, to which came all the Christians both in City and Country. In these Assemblies the Writings of the Apostles and Prophets were read to the People; and the Doctrines of Christianity were farther press'd upon them by the Exhortations or Sermons of the Clergy. Solemn Prayers were offered up to God; and Hymns Sung in Honour of

our Blessed Saviour; and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Administred.

THESE were the several Parts of their Publick Worship and Devotions; and Ecclesiastical History tells us, how punctual and zealous they were to sanctify this Day, by attending upon them. They did not think it enough to Read, and Pray, and Praise God at Home, but made a Conscience of appearing in the Publick Assemblies; from which nothing but Sicknes, and absolute Necessity did ever detain them, and never without great Sorrow; yea, when Persecution at any time forc'd them to keep close, yet if it were possible, would they assemble in the Night, or early in the Morning. And no sooner was there the least mitigation, but they presently return'd to their open Duty, and publickly met all together. So that a Sabbath without *Publick* Worship, seem'd un sanctify'd. Forsaking the Publick Assemblies was reckon'd a degree of Apostacy, and reflected on according to the Merits of the Cause, with severe Censures, in the Primitive Church.

AND the truth is, Publick Worship ought to have the Preference of all others: For those Prayers which are offered in the Publick Assemblies, are most acceptable to God, most necessary for us, and have many Advan-

Advantages above private Devotions. So
the Divine Poet sweetly sings.

*The' Private Prayer be a brave Design,
Yet Publick hath more Promises, more Love:
— Leave there thy Six and Seven;*

Pray with the most, for where most Pray is Heaven.

God is most honour'd and glorified by such
Addresses; and a sense of his Majesty is
maintain'd in the World, somewhat suitable
to his most excellent Greatness and Good-
ness, when by outward Signs and Tokens
we publish and declare the inward Regard
and Esteem we have for his Divine Per-
fections.

By joining in Publick Worship, we also
declare our selves Members of the Body of
Christ which is his Church; which we can-
not be to any purpose, without having Fel-
lowship with God and one another, in all
Holy Duties, of which Prayer and Praise
are the chief. And to these Assemblies our
Saviour promises his special Presence, and
hath appointed a particular Order of Men
to offer up our Prayers in such Places.

AND certainly we may expect a greater
Success when our Petitions are made with
the joint and unanimous Consent of our Fel-
low Christians; and when our Devotions
receive Warmth and Heat from their Exem-
plary Zeal.

So

So that we shou'd consider the Opportunities of Publick Worship, as our great Privilege, as well as necessary Duty. And we shall be the more inclin'd to value it as such, if we consider the sad Case of many of our Fellow-Christians. It is a Mercy which many of our distressed Brethren want, and which they wou'd give all the World to obtain, that *we* have Churches and Oratories to go to, without Lett or Hindrance; that *we* have no Tyrants, or Foreign Enemies, no Noise of Wars, no Armies of Aliens to fright us from the Publick Ordinances; but we may meet together to Worship God, to Hear his Word, and Remember our Crucify'd Master at his Table, without Fear, Disturbance, or Danger. We that have all the External Advantages of Religion, and are even cloy'd with the Plenty of Spiritual Provision, cannot imagine the lamentable Condition of Persecuted Christians, who are forc'd to *serve the Lord with fear*, and attend his Ordinances *with trembling*; who are not permitted to sing the Songs of *Zion* in their own Land; and therefore must hang the Harps upon the Willows, sit weeping by the Rivers of *Babylon*, and hear the Enemy roar in the midst of the Congregations of the Lord. This was often the Case of the *Primitive*
Christi-

Christians, and is now the unhappy Condition of many of our Protestant Brethren; and God may be provok'd to make it ours, if we go on to slight and abuse such rich Means of Grace as we enjoy, at least equal, if not beyond all the Nations of the Earth. If like *Jeshurun* we wax fat, and kick, God, (we may justly fear) will teach us the ~~work~~ of his Ordinances by the want of 'em; send us a *Famine of the Word*, and Sacraments; and remove our *Candlestick* from us, as he did from *Jerusalem*, and the *Eastern Churches*; which tho' once the most flourishing in the World, are now quite ruin'd and destroy'd, and the Places of some of 'em, not so much as known.

But by what hath been said we are persuaded to attend God's holy Publick Worship on this Day; let me in the next Place advise that we would do this, in Communion with the *Church of England*, as by Law most happily Establish'd among us.

And to engage us to this, I might make use of many considerable Arguments: But I shall only observe, that our Publick Service as it is a Form of Prayer, as to the Matter of it; and the Method and Manner of performing it, is very agreeable to the Devotions of Christians in the purest Ages

Ages of the Church ; and very well fitted to promote the Ends of True Religion.

* *Posthumous Sermons, Vol. I. p. 302.*

THE Doctrines that are taught us, are no other, than what are contain'd in the Holy Scriptures ; " I testify to you (says A. B. Tillotson *) that the Reform'd Religion which we profess, and which by the Goodness of God is by Law establish'd in this Nation, is the True Ancient Christianity, the Faith which was at first deliver'd to the Saints, and which is convey'd down to us in the Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

† *Sermon on 1 Cor. 3. v. 15. in Fol. Publish'd by himself. P. 108.*

AND again (says he †) " I have been according to my Opportunities, not a negligent Observer of the Genius and Humour, of the several Sects and Professions of Religion ; and upon the whole Matter, I do in my Conscience believe the Church of *England* to be the best constituted Church in the World ; and that as to the main, the Doctrines, and Government, and Worship of it, are excellently fitted to make Men soberly Religious ; securing Men on the one hand from the wild Freaks of Enthusiasm ; and on the other, from the gross Follies of Superstition." This is the Judg-

Judgment of A. B. Tillotson concerning the Church of *England*; and his known *Piety, Learning, Moderation, and Sincerity*, will add a Value to his Testimony.

IN our *Publick* Worship there is every Thing that is needful to raise and increase true Devotion, and fix it upon its due Object; and make it look like itself; but nothing to divert the Mind from its holy Employment, and divide and weaken its Attention, and make it degenerate into cold Indifferency, or an unbounded Liberty of Expression. It is for the main collected from the Holy Writings; and the rest taken out of the best Liturgies of the Primitive Church. It is compiled with excellent Judgment; express'd in plain, but very proper Language; divided into short, but comprehensive Collects; with Variety enough to entertain the Mind, and prevent its tiring; but not so much as to scatter its Thoughts in unprofitable Wandrings: and where all we have to do, is to bear our Part in it, with all the Warmth and Fervor that we can; and to which the Brevity of each particular Prayer does very much conduce.

IN short, 'tis such a Liturgy as Mr. Fox, the Author of the Martyrology, is not afraid to say *was Indited by the Holy Ghost*; but

but most certainly had a great Testimony in the unspeakable Joy and Contentment holy Men took in it in good King *Edward's* Days; their Zeal for the Maintenance of it, longing for the Restitution of it, and sealing it with their Blood in Queen *Mary's* Days; and the universal Triumphs and Acclamations at the Restoring of it in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign: Which, one wou'd think, were sufficient to recommend it to all sober-minded Persons.

I CAN'T however, but add the Testimony of a Reverend and Holy Martyr, I mean Dr. *Rowland Tailor*, than whom there's scarce a Protestant in our whole Book of Martyrs, that behav'd himself with more *Christian Courage*, and *Constancy*.—His Words to Bishop *Gardiner* and Others are these: “ There was, saith he, set forth
“ by the most Innocent King *Edward*, for
“ whom God be praised everlastingly, the
“ whole Church-Service, with the best
“ Advice of the Learned Men of the
“ Realm, and authorized by the whole
“ Parliament, and received, and publish'd
“ gladly by the whole Realm; which Book
“ was never reform'd but once, (said the
“ Doctor in his Time;) and yet by that
“ one Reformation it was so fully perfect-
“ ed, according to the Rules of our Chri-
stian

“ Christian Religion in every Behalf, that no
“ Christian Conscience can be offended
“ with any Thing therein contain’d.”

How few and comely are our *Ceremonies* ! Such as an humble Devotion would chuse, were they not enjoyn’d ; such as express with Decency, tho’ without Pomp, the inward Sentiments of a pious Mind, and distinguish our *Religious* from *Common Assemblies*, and *that’s all*.

As to the Musick of our Church, no Man can easily express to what a Pitch it wings Devotion ; what holy Flames and Ardours it excites ; how it withdraws the Soul from Earth, and mounts it up to Heaven. Indeed it gives the highest Relish to Religion, and prepares the Soul for ev’ry Thing that is good.

As for our *Sermons*, they are generally very instructive, and such as answer the true Design of Preaching. We are taught the Fundamental Doctrines of Christianity, and instructed in the whole Circle of our Duty to God, our Neighbours, and our Selves, in a plain, grave, and intelligible Manner. Some indeed there are who complain for want of *Edifying* Preaching among us ; but such Persons certainly do mistake both the *Means*, and *Nature* of Edification.

THEY

THEY take Him for the most Powerful and Edifying Preacher, who hath the loudest Voice, who lays most about Him, and is more vehement than others. But he indeed is the best Preacher who presses his Doctrine with strong and powerful Reasons, without which there's no Force in the Loudest Words that can be spoken.

AND then, some Men mistake the Nature of Edification; they think it consists in sudden Heats, and Damps, and take the stirring of their bodily Passions and Humours, for the Operations of the Spirit upon their Souls: Whereas a Bright or Lowring Day, or a Dose of Physick, can do the same Things; and they are common to the Worst, with the Best of Men. But then are not Men truly *Edify'd* (or *built up*, as the Word signifies) when they are Instructed and Confirm'd in a right Faith; and Determin'd and Engag'd to live a holy Conversation? And to promote these good Ends, there are no Sermons better fitted, than those in the Church of *England*. And tho' our Sermons are slighted so much by some at Home, yet are they had in great Esteem by our Protestant Neighbours; who have Translated many of 'em to Edify their own People. Yea, the most Judicious of our Dissenting Brethren will own our Sermons

to

to be very excellently fitted to promote Religion and Virtue; and they are only the Weak, and most Ignorant Persons among them, that talk otherwise. And as an Evidence of this, if the Libraries, and Closets of the Dissenting Ministers, who are of best Repute among them for Piety and Learning, were search'd, I dare say it would be found that they have more Books of Church-of-England Divines, than of those of their own Party. Which plainly shows us, that *They* have another kind of Opinion of Church-Men's Sermons, than their Ignorant Hearers.

BUT since we are upon this Subject, let us enquire more particularly into the Reasons which are generally given by the *Dissenting Laity*, for their leaving the Communion of the Church of *England*, and betaking themselves to Separate Assemblies.

NOW they commonly pretend that our Prayers being Set-Forms, hinders Praying by the Spirit; or else that our Ceremonies are such as they cannot comply with; for our Doctrine they allow to be Sound, and such as they have no Objection against; tho' they do not much admire our Way of delivering it; which they think is not altogether so Edifying as their own.

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I DO

I DO not intend to enter into a Controverfy with them on these Heads ; upon which there has been enough said already * to give Satisfaction to *reasonable*, and *unprejudic'd* Men : I will only propose a few Considerations that may serve to obviate the Prejudices that may be conceiv'd upon these Accounts ; and shew, that they are not sufficient Reasons for leaving the Establish'd Church ; and renouncing Communion with it.

* Dr. Falkner's *Libertas Ecclesiastica*. And the *Excellent Pieces call'd The London Cases*.—And Mr. Benner's *Abridgment of them*. Mr. Hoadly's *several Discourses on this Subject*. Dr. Sherlock on *Religious Assemblies*.

See Mr. Dorrington's *Sermon on Praying by the Spirit*.

I. As to the first Thing, That our Forms of Prayer are an hindrance to Praying by the Spirit, or inconsistent with it ; I desire it may be consider'd that there are two distinct Ways of Praying by the Spirit spoken of in Scripture, which are very different one from another ; The one is extraordinary, and that which was but for a Time, and was to be perform'd then by some in the Church : The other ordinary, and which was to continue as long as Christianity, *i. e.* to the End of the World : And this is the common Duty of Christians, or a Privilege common to all good Christians as such.

THE

THE extraordinary Way of Praying by the Spirit was, when the Spirit of God did in a miraculous Manner dictate and suggest to them immediately what they were to utter in their Prayers. By which immediate Inspiration and Suggestion of the Holy Spirit of God, some were then enabled to Pray, as well as to Preach, and to utter Hymns and Spiritual Songs, which were immediately dictated to them by the Holy Ghost. This is that Praying by the Spirit which the Apostle speaks of, 1 Cor. 14. 15. when he says, *I will pray with the Spirit, and with the Understanding also.* He had this Gift, and so had some others in those Times; and it was a Part of that Gift which went under the Name of *Prophecy*; and some of those who had it were call'd *Prophets* in those Times. This was attended also with another Miraculous Gift, which was the Gift of Languages, without ever learning them by their own Endeavours, and Study, and the Instruction of Men. And the Apostle in that Chapter is reprov'g some of these Prophets, for that they affected to Pray sometimes in a Language which the Hearers did not understand, to make a vain-glorious Show of their having the Gift of Languages; therefore he says, *I will pray with*
E 2 *the*

the Spirit, and with the Understanding also :
That is, in such a manner, as that those
who hear me may understand what I say,
and be able to say their AMEN to it.

1 Cor. 13.
8.

Now this Gift, or this Way of Praying,
was intended to be but for a Time in
the Church, at the first Planting of the
Gospel, as was also the Gift of Languages.
This the Apostle plainly intimates when
he says, *Whether they be Prophecies, they
shall cease.* And as the Apostle says this,
so the Event proves it. It is evident that
this Way of Praying is long since ceas'd in
the Church; nor can any now pretend to
Pray thus by the Spirit, without the high-
est Presumption.

BUT there is another Way of Praying
by the Spirit, which is common to all Chri-
stians, and to all Ages of the Christian
Church: And this (in short) is nothing,
but Praying with Understanding and Know-
ledge, and a serious Application, of Heart
and Mind to the Duty, and with suitable
Motions and Affections in the doing it;
Praying with the Exercise of these Graces
and Virtues which go to the constituting
a good Christian; with Reverence and
Godly Fear, with Love, Faith, Trust and
Confidence in the Promises of God, with
Hungryings, and Thirstings after Righte-
ousness,

ousness, and a Sense of our Spiritual Wants; with the Exercise of those Graces upon their proper Occasions, which are, in the Scripture-Phrase, the *Fruits of the Spirit*. This is Praying in the Spirit, or by the Spirit, even the Spirit of Grace and Supplication; when we Pray with our *own* Spirits, having our Hearts and Minds duly engag'd in the Duty, and as influenc'd by the Holy Spirit of God; tho' he does not immediately dictate and suggest to us, or inspire us with what we utter and say to God in our Prayers.

THE Matter of Prayer we are sufficiently taught in the Holy Scriptures, and may learn from thence, and there is no need that this should be anew reveal'd, and dictated to us ev'ry Time that we Pray, tho' we ought always to Pray by the Spirit. And the Manner of Praying duly we may derive from the Sanctifying Influences and Operations of the Holy Spirit of God upon us, common to all good Christians as such. And as a Man may have much of the Holy Scriptures, and so of the fit Matter of Prayer in his Memory, and that very ready to be utter'd, without having any of the true Graces of a Christian in his Heart; and consequently notwithstanding all his fair Appearances, does not

Pray at all by the Spirit : So, on the other hand, a Person very unapt at such kind of Effusions, and always making use of other People's Assistances, may yet Exercise all those Graces and Virtues, in which Praying by the Spirit does consist.

So that if it be not our own Faults, we may Pray by the Spirit, notwithstanding our making use of Pre-composed Set Forms of Prayer ; for the *manner* in which we Pray, whether by a *Form*, or *without* one, is only a Circumstance, and not of the *Essence* of Prayer ; *that* consists in the Fervour and Sincerity of our Hearts in this Duty. And therefore we find that Holy Men of Old, who unquestionably Pray'd by the Spirit, Pray'd by Set Forms, as *Moses, David, Asaph, Hezekiab*, and Others, And God Himself has Prescrib'd and Directed this both in the Old Testament, and the New ; particularly our Lord taught his Disciples to Pray by a Form ; and then certainly we may Pray with the Spirit, and Pray by a Form ; for it can't be suppos'd he wou'd direct them to Pray in such a manner as was inconsistent with their Praying by, or in the Spirit.

We are commanded also to *Sing* in the Spirit ; and *with Grace in our Hearts*, which is the same thing : Now if this may be

be done by a Set Form, by Psalms compos'd and prepar'd for them; then may we Pray with the Spirit in the Use of a Pre-compos'd Set Form. So that they cannot pretend that *we* cannot Pray by a Set Form, and by the Spirit at the same time, without condemning *themselves*, who sing Psalms and Hymns, which contain all the fit Matter of Prayer, in the same manner.

BESIDES, tho' the Prayer the Minister uses in their Assemblies be not a Set Form to *Him*, yet it is certainly so to the *People*; They must therefore either allow that one may Pray with the Spirit, in the Use of a Form, or confess, that whatever their Minister does, none of his People, (who Pray by a Prayer made and compos'd for them by another) do Pray with the Spirit, or by the Spirit, when they join with their Minister in his Prayer,

UPON the whole Matter therefore, since our Prayers in the *Publick Liturgy*, are undoubtedly directed to the right Object of our Worship; are compos'd of such Petitions as are proper to be put up in Publick; and are express'd in a grave and serious Manner, fit to excite the Devotion of those that attend them; we need not doubt but we may Pray by the Spirit in the Use of them, tho' the Words be a Form; which

which is indeed, rather a Help and Advantage, than any Hindrance to Praying by the Spirit: For when the Words are prepar'd to our Hands, we are more at leisure to mind our Affections, and keep our Hearts close to the Petitions, than when our Fancy is taken up in Inventing, or Expecting a Novel Phrase.

* *Posthumous Sermons, Vol. 10. p. 398.*

I WILL leave all I have said upon this Subject, on the Reader's Mind, in the Words of the most Judicious and Excellent Archbishop Tillotson *. "He that takes care (*says he*) to put up wise and decent Petitions to God, and considers carefully what to beg of Him, and asks it in a becoming manner, with Faith and true Fervency of Affection, though in a Form, hath much more Reason to conclude that he Prays in and by the Spirit of God, than he that hath the greatest Freedom of *Extempore* Effusions."

AND now, since it is certain that Men may Pray by the Spirit in the Use of the Publick Liturgy, notwithstanding its being a Form; may it not reasonably be ask'd why they shou'd forsake it, for any other Forms of Worship that are set up in Opposition to it? A Publick Stated Liturgy hath this Advantage above those Prayers that

flow

flow immediately from the Minister's own Mind, that it is free to be read and examin'd by all, who are to join in it; whereas in the other Case, we may truly say as the *Israelites* to *Pharaoh*, *We know not with what we shall serve the Lord, till we come thither*; and are oblig'd to be like a Man that Subscribes a Paper or Petition to his Prince, without reading, or at least considering the Contents of it. So that I may very well affirm, that in the serious Use of the *Liturgie*, we may be more secure of offering up to God such Praises and Prayers as are acceptable to him, and fit for publick and general Occasions, than we can be in any separate Assembly, where the whole is left to the Discretion and Abilities of the Minister.

No Body that examines it, but must own, (tho' it is not in every Expression what they could wish it, yet) there is nothing in this Service indecent; nothing unsuitable to the Majesty of him who receives it; or unbecoming the Character of those who offer it. It is compos'd of *Confessions*, of *Praises* and *Thanksgivings*, of *Prayers* and *Intercessions*; and these very well adapted to the Conditions and Obligations, and Necessities of the generality of Christians. And what can be wish'd for
more

more in a Publick Service? Or where can Men go, where they can be *certain* of so good and so proper Assistances? Let us therefore conscientiously and seriously attend upon this Publick Worship, which is so very well fitted to express the Devout Affections of all who bring any Devotion along with them; and to excite and awaken all such Religious Acts as are necessary and becoming in their proper Places, and upon proper Occasions; And not prefer those *Compositions* before it, as we must join with as soon as we hear them, and often before we can pass a true Judgment upon them.

2. ANOTHER thing that hath prejudic'd some against joining in our Publick Worship, is the *Ceremonies* that attend it. I have endeavour'd to obviate this Prejudice before, by observing that they are only such as serve to secure the Order and Decency of Publick Worship; but if our Superiors shou'd think fit to take them away entirely, or substitute others in their Place, in compliance with the Weakness of those who take Offence at them, I (for my part) shou'd be very well pleas'd; for they are not enjoin'd as *Parts of Religion*, or as things necessary in themselves; but only (as I said) for Decency and Order sake.
But

But then, on the other side, this is certain, that 'tis most unreasonable for Men to break the Unity of that Church whereof they are Members, and with which they agree in all the *Essentials* of *Doctrine* and *Worship*, only for the sake of two or three harmless Ceremonies; which being nowhere forbidden in Scripture, cannot, to be sure, be unlawful to be us'd; for *where there is no Law, there is no Transgression*.

THIS is a Temper very far from that of our Blessed Saviour's, who (as the Great Archbishop Tillotson observes †) when he was here upon Earth, did not only conform to all Divine Institutions, but also to Religious Rites and Ceremonies, and the Observance of Days and Times of Human Appointment and Usage, when the Things requir'd, were of an innocent and indifferent Nature; and this without any anxious Scrupulosity, and perverse disputing every Inch of his Liberty; with great Peaceableness observing those Religious Festivals among the *Jews*, which had no other Appointment but of the Civil Authority, and were of meer Human Institution; and with great Prudence steering a middle course between endless Superstition, and petulant Faction; giving all Christians
herein

† *Posthumous Sermon*.
Vol. 10.
p. 26.

herein a Patern, how to demean themselves in like Cases, with great Peaceableness and Obedience, and not to do, or avoid any thing, out of peevishness and singularity of Humour, and a Spirit of Contradiction; and not to indulge needless and endless Scruples, especially on the wrong side; as it is too visible many Mens Scruples lie almost wholly about Obedience to Authority, and Compliance with indifferent Customs; but very seldom about the Danger of Disobedience, and Unpeaceableness, and rending in pieces the Church of God by needless Separations and Divisions. Those very few *Ceremonies* that are retain'd in the Church of *England*, for the better promoting the Decency and Solemnity of Publick Devotion, are acknowledg'd by most of the Dissenters themselves, to be *indifferent* things, and *not* forbidden by the Word of God; and therefore they ought certainly to comply with them, rather than break and disturb the Peace of the Church, for the sake of such trifling things. But I shall say no more on this Argument; only (with Sir Matthew Hale †) I cannot but think, that tho' many of those of the *Separation* are very good Men, yet they have very *narrow* Souls, who thus break the Peace

† Life of
Judge Hale,
p. 36.

Peace and Unity of the Church, about such *inconsiderable Matters*.

3. ANOTHER thing that is pretend-
ed for leaving the Publick Worship of the
Church of *England*, is, that they are bet-
ter edify'd by the Sermons that are Preach'd
in separate Assemblies; which they seem to
ascribe to the *manner* in which their Dis-
courses are delivered. I wou'd not magni-
fy the Preaching in our own Church too
much, nor detract from that, of others;
but this is certain, that many who have
gone from their own Church to a separate
Meeting, to hear a better Sermon, have
heard a worse. But however that be, so
long as the Doctrine that is Preach'd in
both Places is the same (as they grant it is)
there cannot be so much difference in the
Words and Phrases wherein it is express'd,
or, in the *manner* of its delivery, as will
serve to justify a Separation.

THERE is indeed so much unaccoun-
table Fancy and Humour to be seen in those
different Judgments Men make of Preachers,
that it were a very hard Case, if the Peace,
Order, and Unity of the Church were to
lie at the Mercy of Mens different Fancies.
Some are taken with a grave and solid,
others with a florid and polite Preacher;
some are pleas'd with a Tone, others with
Earnest-

Earnestness and Vehemence of Action and Voice. How often do Men vary in their Opinions of Preachers, and change their Churches as their Fancy changes?

THOSE Preachers who are lik'd by such whose Duty obliges them to attend upon them, and who yet leave them for others they admire more, are frequently crowded and follow'd by Strangers, and those that have no Relation to them. Now what work would this make in all Civil Societies, were Fancy suffer'd to over-rule Publick Establishments? And we have as little reason to expect that God will allow of such Inroads of Fancy upon the Peace and Unity of the Church.

THE Design of Preaching the Gospel is not to please and tickle a wanton Fancy, but to instruct us in the plain Duties of it, and to furnish us with the Arguments and Motives to a Holy Life: And such Discourses, I hope, we may meet with in most Churches in this Nation, tho' it may be not always dress'd to every Man's Palate. It is a sign Men are full fed, when they cannot be contented with plain wholesome Food, but complain if they have not some delicious Sawces to create and tempt an Appetite; this, I believe, we may generally observe, that Men who govern them-

selves

selves by such Fancies, do not always make the wisest Choice, nor the best Improvements.

I must indeed be so fair as to own, there are too many of our Preachers who are not only grossly careless and negligent in the Manner of delivering their Sermons, but also justly liable to Censure and Objection in the *Matter* of them. They employ their time in agitating of *Controversies* of no Use and Importance, but often of dangerous Consequence to the Hearers; such as tend to alienate Mens Minds from their *Governors*, and fire their Spirits against one another. These are not, in such Instances, the Ministers of Christ; they do not Preach the Gospel of Peace, and that Good-will to Men, which it is the Design of Christian Religion to promote in the World. And therefore I cannot think it inexcusable, in such a case, for Men to seek for better Provision, *in the Communion of the Church*; where they may certainly find it, without running to separate Meetings; which wou'd be only to make the Remedy as bad as the Disease.

T H E R E is no one Point of Duty and Practice which we cannot generally be as secure of learning, under the Ministry of the Establish'd Church, as of any other
what-

whatsoever; we may be sure of hearing all the Doctrines of the Gospel honestly and compleatly delivered; and all the Motives of it fairly and affectionately proposed; and he must be a very prejudiced or ignorant Man indeed, that will affirm the Preaching of the Publick Ministers, is not, at least, as sufficient for this End, as any that is oppos'd to it.

1 Cor. 3.
6, 7.

BESIDES, what the Apostle says is most undoubtedly true, *Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase*: If the Seeds be both of the same intrinsick Goodness (as is now suppos'd) one may be more beautiful to the Eye than the other; but the only things on which their Fruitfulness will depend, are the Goodness of the Soil they are sown in, and the Blessing of Heaven: And the Grace of God, who is the God of Peace and Order, may be much more reasonably expected, by those that keep the Unity of the Church, and are regular and orderly in their Stations, than by such as separate from the Establish'd Church, whereof they are Members, only to satisfy a vain Curiosity, and gratify their *itching Ears*.

UPON the whole matter therefore, it is very evident, there is no sufficient Reason to be given for Mens leaving our Publick Forms

Forms of Worship, and betaking themselves to those separate Assemblies that are set up in opposition to it. Our Publick Devotions are no way polluted with such impure Mixtures of Idolatry and Superstition, as render them unfit for a Christian to join in; nor is their being perform'd by a Precompos'd Set Form, any way inconsistent with Praying by the Spirit, or those Holy Affections, which must render our Prayers acceptable to God. So that if a Man have fram'd his Opinions so, as to think meanly of the *Publick Service*, in comparison of those ways of Worship set up in opposition to it, (which can hardly proceed from any thing but *Education* and *Custom*) yet so long as he may continue in the Communion of the Church without Sin, he ought certainly to do so, for the sake of preserving Peace and Unity; for 'tis not possible for Men to be in all things all of one Mind; but in the midst of that Variety of Opinion, they ought still to preserve not only a Unity of Affection, but a Unity of Communion. And the same may be said of *Ceremonies*; which tho' perhaps we may not so much admire, and wish they were remov'd; yet certainly, so long as they are not contrary to God's Word, we are not to forsake the Communion of a Church,

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only

only on account of them. For so long as the *Essentials* of Christian Worship are kept pure and entire, and are not so blended with unlawful Mixtures, but that we may safely join in it, without being at all oblig'd to partake of any Sin; to separate from the Communion of a Church on account of indifferent Rites and Ceremonies, wou'd be, in a manner, to separate from the Communion of the whole Catholick Church; there being no Church in the World, but what has some indifferent Modes and Ceremonies of Worship. And there's less Reason still, why Men should leave the Communion of a Church, only on account of its Preacher's delivering the Doctrine which we own and profess our selves, in a Way and Manner we do not so much admire. This is such a Pretence for Separation, as was scarce ever heard of in the World before, and the weakest that can easily be offer'd: For so long as our Doctrine is sound and good, there cannot surely be any Reason for leaving the Church, only because our Preaching is not, in their Opinion, altogether so taking as some other Mens.

AND let this be sufficient to persuade us to attend upon God's Publick Worship and Service, as it is perform'd in the Church of *England*.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Receiving the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and that it is a Duty more peculiarly proper, and never to be omitted, (if we have opportunity) on the LORD'S-DAY.

THIS being so considerable a part of Christian Worship, and so proper a Service for the Lord's Day, I thought I cou'd do no less than allow it a Chapter by it self, in this Discourse. In which I do not intend to treat in a copious manner, concerning the Nature and Benefits of the Holy Sacrament; nor to represent the several Obligations we lie under to receive it; nor lastly, to treat largely of the Preparation that is necessary to qualify us for so doing: These things being allow'd a particular Consideration, in many just Discourses on this Subject. I shall only observe to the Reader, that the Sacrament being instituted in Commemoration of the Work of our Re-

F 2 demption,

demption, compleated on the first Day of the Week by our Saviour's Triumphant Resurrection from the Dead, is for that Reason a most proper and necessary part of the Holy Worship of the Lord's-Day.

FOR at the Lord's Table we Commemorate this our Redeemer's Conquest over Death; and do as it were Feast on the Spoils of the King of Terrors. This is that Bread which giveth Life to the World, by putting an end to Death, and becoming the Principle and Earnest of Immortality. Glory therefore (shou'd we say) be to this mighty Conqueror, whom all the Powers of Darkness could not detain Prisoner! This is our Crucify'd Lord, who died with Scorn and Ignominy, but rose with Glory and Power! We do not *eat the Sacrifices of the Dead*, but feed on a *Living Saviour*!

THESE Reflections made the first Christians very frequent in their Attendance at the Lord's Table. They never met together for Religious Worship but this was Part, and always accounted a Principal Part of it. They did never publickly meet together to Pray or Hear; without *doing this* in Remembrance of our Redeemer. And this they did very frequently. In the Church of *Jerusalem* every Day; as we read, *Acts 2. 46. they continu'd daily with*

one

one accord in the Temple; and breaking Bread at home, did eat their meat with gladness, and singleness of heart; praising God, (the proper Work of the Eucharistical Feast) and having favour with all the People. And again, they continu'd steadfastly, or unweariedly, in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayer. The Word which we render continu'd steadfastly, says Bishop Patrick, denotes both the Frequency of the Action, and that they were not tir'd with it. And we have Reason to think it was so in the Apostles Days, when it is evident this Custom of receiving every Day, continu'd some Ages after: So it was (says Dr. Sherlock) in St. Cyprian's time; and so it was at Rome in St. Hierom's Time: And the Apostolical Canons, and the Synod of Antioch denounce Excommunication against those Christians who come to Church to join in other Religious Offices, but go away without receiving the Lord's Supper. Afterwards as Mens Zeal in Religion decay'd, so they abated in the frequent Celebration of this Feast; and from every Day it came to once or twice a Week, or every Lord's-Day, 'till it grew so disus'd that the Church was forc'd to make Provision by her Publick Canons, that every Christian

Acts 2.46.

would at least receive the Sacrament Three times a Year, on the Three great Feasts of the Church, *Christmas, Easter, and Whitsunday.*

BUT the principal Time for receiving this Sacrament, seems to have been on the *Lord's-Day*; according to what we find, *Acts 20. 7.* that the Disciples were assembled *on the first Day of the week to break bread*; and the *Syriac Translation* of those words, *1 Cor. 11. 20.* which (as Bishop *Patrick* tells us) runs thus, *When ye meet together, ye do not eat and drink as becomes the Day of the Lord.*

AND thus it continu'd in the following Ages of the Church, to be a constant Part of the *Lord's-Day* Worship. An Ancient Writer tells us, it was the usual time wherein Christians received the *Lord's Supper.* Which was observ'd by the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*, who mentions the Christians assembling to eat on a *Solemn Day.* And *Pliny*, in his Letter to *Trajan*, says, that in his time they met together to sing Praises to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by a Sacrament; and that upon a *set Day*; by which, doubtless, he means the *Lord's Day.*

And to the same purpose speaks *Justin Martyr* *, who, when he reckons up the several Parts of Publick Worship perform'd

* Reeve's Translation of the Apologies, p. 124.

form'd by Christians on the Lord's-Day, expressly says, that they Administred the Holy Sacrament. And Tertullian affirms the same thing; nay, he seems to intimate, that in some places they did it twice in a Day, both Morning and Evening. In their Assemblies before Day (as Tertullian's words are) as well as in the time of Meat: Which we know was Supper-time, when they held their Feasts of Charity. And if they met publickly twice a Day, there's no doubt but they receiv'd as often, because they had no Religious Assemblies, without the Communion.

THIS indeed is not now the general Practice, but in some Churches the Primitive Custom is still retain'd. The Ethiopian Church does to this Day celebrate the Communion every Lord's-Day*; and that with the addition of those ancient Feasts of Charity, which are now disus'd in other Churches; which shews that the Gospel was planted amongst them very early, and before those Feasts were abrogated. And most of the Lutheran Congregations, in Germany it self, do Celebrate this Sacrament every Lord's-Day, as Mr. Dorrington assures us†; whose words immediately following, being so very ap-
 F 4 polite

* Ludolphus his History of Ethiopia, p. 298.

† Account of a Journey, &c. p. 334.

posite to my purpose, I cannot but transcribe.

" I cannot but think therefore (says he)
 " that the Church of *England* is Reform'd
 " according to the Model of the best Re-
 " form'd Churches beyond the Seas, which
 " has provided, and perhaps ordered, that
 " this Sacrament be Celebrated every
 " Lord's Day. But the Rule and Precept
 " of Holy Scripture, together and in Con-
 " junction with the Practice and Example
 " of those very Persons, by whom the Spi-
 " rit of God transmitted the Rule to the
 " World, is certainly rather to be observ'd,
 " than the Order of any later Church; and
 " our Rule in the Case is certainly most
 " agreeable with the Holy Scriptures. I
 " most heartily wish (continues he) our
 " People would more generally than they
 " do, fall in with so Just, and Pious, and
 " Edifying an Order. We ought indeed
 " to relinquish and purge out more entirely
 " from amongst us this Relick of Popery;
 " for it was the Papists who first intro-
 " duced, and betray'd the People into the
 " seldom receiving of this Sacrament, not-
 " withstanding they now reproach us with
 " it. They have taught the World, in-
 " stead of Receiving, to Reverence it
 " mightily first, and then by degrees to
 " Adore

“ Adore it. Certainly 'tis an Error, and
“ a great one, to have such an Awe and
“ Reverence for the Sacrament it self, as
“ to have none at all for the Ordinance or
“ Institution of it, which requires it to be
“ received. And it is doubtless a wrong
“ and superstitious Fear to be afraid of re-
“ ceiving it unworthily, and not to be
“ afraid of neglecting and omitting to Re-
“ ceive it as often as we might have oppor-
“ tunity to do so.

WITH the same concern for restoring
the more frequent Celebration of the Holy
Communion, speaks Dr. Sherlock: “ It is
“ highly useful (says he) (not to say ne-
“ cessary) to restore the Apostolical and
“ Primitive Practice, to celebrate the Lord's
“ Supper as often as we meet for Publick
“ Worship, if we wou'd have our Wor-
“ ship true and Christian Worship, accord-
“ ing to our Saviour's own Institution, as
“ understood and practis'd by the Apostles
“ themselves.

AND to the same purpose speaks ano-
ther very Learned Man: “ 'Tis allow'd
“ that the Primitive Christians made this
“ Sacrament one constant Part of their
“ Publick Devotions: God grant that we
“ may, by degrees, cure this Defect in our
“ Publick Worship; as to be sure we shall,
“ when

when we recover the Holy Zeal which animated the first Professors of our Holy Religion, and come to live as they did, so as to be *always* ready to Communicate.

AND the truth is, 'tis not fit that Men should frequently, or indeed at all approach this Sacred Ordinance, as the first Christians did, if they will not also imitate their Exemplary Lives. Notwithstanding the Care our Church has taken, that Men should often attend upon this Sacred Institution, she gives not the least Encouragement to such as continue in their Sins, to think they can be meet Partakers of these Holy Mysteries. On the contrary, she particularly and earnestly warns those that live in the Love and Practice of their Sins, to forbear coming to this Holy Table, lest they eat and drink their own Damnation.

AND this certainly is one of the great and provoking Sins of this Age, that so many Persons thrust themselves into this Holy Service, without repenting of their Sins, and reforming their Lives: Some out of meer Ceremony, and as a thing of course, without any regard to the Obligations they thereby lay upon themselves; and others to satisfy the Law, which requires them to take this Sacrament in the way to their
several

several *Posts*, and *Preferments*; and so they prostitute Christ's holy Institutions, to serve their own Secular Interests and Designs. And I cannot but upon this Occasion say, 'tis great Pity that Ordinance which was design'd by Christ to be the great Instrument of *Holiness*, and a Badge and Means of Union among Christians, shou'd (with some Men) serve only to such a Purpose as a *Shoulder-knot* might do, to tell what *Party* they are of, and how they are distinguish'd in it.

BUT as we must be careful not to approach this Holy Sacrament, without a sincere Resolution of parting with our Sins; so, on the other hand, we must not superstitiously abstain, when we are duly qualify'd, upon Pretence of our wanting Time and Leisure, to Prepare our selves as we ought.

THIS is an Extreme into which many good People are apt to run; they imagine (tho' they live never so good Lives) that they must not come to the Holy Sacrament, without a *Week's*, a longer, or shorter Abstaining from Company, and going thro' several Rounds of Devotion which they have tied themselves to; and if their Business and Employments will not allow them
to

to do this, they cannot think themselves fit to approach the Lord's Table.

NOW 'tis true, that besides our Habitual Preparation by Repentance, and the constant Endeavours of a Holy Life; it is very proper, and a very pious and commendable Custom in Christians, before their coming to the Sacrament, to set apart some particular Time for the Examination of their Lives, and the more frequent Exercises of Piety and Devotion. But certainly this is not absolutely necessary to qualify us to receive this Sacrament in a due, and worthy manner. All that is indispensibly necessary for this Purpose, is to *Repent us truly of our Sins past, to amend our Lives, and to be in perfect Charity with all Men;* as 'tis express'd in our Communion-Service; and if we are thus qualify'd, we need not doubt being made meet partakers of these holy Mysteries.

As for that more solemn Preparation by Self-Examination, Retirement, and Extraordinary Devotion, it is matter of Prudence, and cannot be fix'd by Rules, that will equally fit every Person. Sometimes these Things are necessary, and sometimes good, and fitting; some have greater Reason to spend more Time in this manner than others;

thers; I mean those whose Accounts are heavier, because they have long run upon the Score, and neglected themselves: And some also have more Leisure and Freedom for it, by reason of their easy Condition and Circumstances in the World: And therefore are oblig'd to allow a greater Portion of Time for the Exercises of Piety and Devotion. And 'tis certain, upon the whole Matter, that no Person is always oblig'd to take the same Course; or to abstain from the Sacrament, because they have not that Time they could wish, to spend in holy Exercises.

THE great and indispensable Necessity that lies upon Christians, is a Holy Life; and provided they are thus habitually Prepar'd, they can never be absolutely unfit for this Holy Sacrament. Nay, this is a very good Preparation; and there can be no Reason why Men should not be very well satisfied with it, unless they intend to make the same use of the Sacrament that many of the *Papists* do of Confession, and Absolution, which is to quit with God once or twice a Year, that so they may begin to sin upon a new Score.

THE Apostle indeed does enjoin Christians to *Examine themselves before they Eat of that Bread, and Drink of that Cup, &c.*

* See it explained in
A. B. Tilton's
Sermon of
Frequent
Communion.

&c. But, not to dispute the Meaning of that Place *, He does not say that there is any greater Degree of Worthiness required to receive the Lord's Supper, than there is to Pray to God ; and the Truth is, it concerns the Sacrament, no more than it does Prayer, or any other Religious Duty. He who is fit to Pray to God, is fit to Eat and Drink at the Lord's Table ; and he who is not fit for either, is not fit to die. " He " (says an Ancient Father) that lives not " so, as that he may be fit to receive every " Day, is not fit to receive once in a " Year."

AND indeed we cannot imagine that the Primitive Christians, who received the Sacrament so frequently, that they judg'd it as Essential and Necessary a Part of their Publick Worship, as any other Part of it whatsoever, even as their Hymns, and Prayers, and Reading, and Interpreting the Word of God ; I say, we cannot well conceive how they who celebrated it so constantly, and yet were *Lawyers, Tradesmen, Merchants*, and followed other Employments, could allot any more Time for a solemn Separation for it, than they did for any other Part of Divine Worship : and cannot but conclude, that they thought all those who did heartily embrace the Christian

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ftian Religion, and endeavour'd to frame their Lives according to the Holy Rules and Precepts of it, were always fit to Communicate in this solemn Profession and Acknowledgment of it; without abstaining a Week, or more from Company, and saying over a Multitude of Prayers, that too often are the Effect of a wild Superstition, rather than the proper Expressions of a solid, and reasonable Devotion.

The Sum of what I have said I will lay before the Reader in the Words * of a very * Bp. Fleet-wood's
Excellent, and Celebrated Bishop of our Reason-
Church. In Answer to this Question, ble Com-
How much Time must I take to come to the municant,
Sacrament, prepar'd as I ought? He says— P. 72.
No certain Time can be assign'd for that;
and I wou'd not have you scrupulous about
it: If it be the first Time, you will do
well to examine your Conscience thorough-
ly, and look carefully back into your Life
past, and see wherein you have been faulty,
or neglectful; Consider especially the Sins
of your Inclination, and those to which
your particular Calling, and way of Living,
expose you most; Consider well the
Temptations that draw you to them; that
you may resolve with good Assurance a-
gainst them for the Time to come, as well
as Repent of what is past. Do this very
well

well at first; and then a Sober, Virtuous, and Religious Life, will keep you constantly prepar'd, and fit to come to the Lord's Table. You may take as much Time as you please to prepare your Self before-hand, by Reading, Prayer, and Meditation; but I dare not say, that this or that Portion of Time, is so necessary to it, as that you shall offend, if you spend it not in those good Exercises. The Church has made no such Rules, but supposes that if you live like a good Christian, a little Time will fit you for the Sacrament. And truly, as you are a Man of Business, do you but say your Prayers constantly, live virtuously, and exercise your Calling honestly and conscientiously, and I do not see but you may be in your Shop on *Saturday*, and be a good Communicant on *Sunday Morning*. To be heartily humbled before God for our Sins past is *an Act of the Mind*. To resolve stedfastly to live better is *an Act of the Mind*. To believe that Christ died for our Sins, and to be thankful to God, for that Infinite Mercy are *Acts of the Mind*. And so it is to forgive those that have injur'd us. All these Preparatory Things are *Acts of the Mind*. And therefore take but care to live well, and you shall always be daly prepar'd to come to the Communion.

And

And when you consider how frequently the Primitive Christians went to the Sacrament, and yet were Lawyers, Tradesmen, Merchants, and follow'd other Employments, you will conclude that an Innocent and Virtuous Life must fit one for the Sacrament, without a *Week's*, a longer or a shorter abstaining from Company, or Business. I do not say this to blame any one who takes these Courses before the Sacrament; for sometimes it is necessary, and sometimes good and fitting; but that you shou'd not think your self always oblig'd to take the same Course, or abstain from the Sacrament, because you have not had *that time* to spend in holy Exercises. 'Tis a Misfortune, that one can give no Rules that will fit *all* Christians; and that the best Rules will hurt some or other, if closely follow'd. Discretion is the best Director in the World.

So that from what has been observ'd, it appears there is no Reason for Men to miss any Opportunity of Receiving this Holy Sacrament, upon account of the Difficulty of those Pious Exercises, which they esteem necessary to qualify them for it, and which they have not Time to perform: Nor is there more in that other Pretence which some give in, as a Reason for their not frequently

quently attending on this Holy Ordinance; namely, that the frequent Use of the Sacrament is likely to diminish that Reverence we ought to have for it. On the contrary, 'tis the likeliest Means to increase our Veneration and Respect towards it. For tho' Familiarity with the Best of Men may be apt to diminish that Respect that was paid to them, by reason of those Frailties and Imperfections which are sometimes mix'd with very great Virtues, and which are only discover'd by a great Intimacy with them; yet the oftner we converse with God in his Holy Ordinances, the more we shall admire his Divine Perfections, and the more we shall be dispos'd to conform ourselves to his Likeness. For an Object of Infinite Perfection in itself, and of Infinite Goodness to us, will always raise our Admiration, and heighten our Esteem and Respect the more we Contemplate it; it being the discovery of some Imperfection, where we thought there was none, that abates the Value and Reverence we have for the Object. And accordingly we find, that tho' the Primitive Christians communicated some every Day, some every Lord's-Day, yet they still retain'd a just Veneration for these holy Mysteries; instead of lessening, it rather increas'd and cherish'd it; and there's nothing
to

to which we can so reasonably ascribe the exemplary Fervour of their Souls, and Purity of their Lives, as to their frequent Attendance upon this Holy Ordinance. This, as it was a means to set their *Master* always before their Eyes, so it left an Awe upon their Spirits not to dishonour him by their Lives. And if the frequent Reception of the holy Sacrament produce this good Effect in Men, 'tis no great Matter, nay, 'tis so much the better, if it dispossess them of that superstitious Reverence (if we may call it so) that makes Men more afraid of doing their Duty at all, than careful and solicitous to do it as they ought. For this we may always depend upon as a certain Rule, that Men can never want as much Reverence and Veneration for this Sacred Institution as God requires, if they find it an Instrument of promoting that *Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* And as 'tis certain that no Man can have a due Veneration for this Sacrament, that neglects to receive it when he has opportunity; so neither can he ever want it, who receives every Lord's Day, or oftner, if he take care to answer his Obligations, and live as becomes a Christian.

to which we can so reasonably ascribe the
 of their Lives: as to their frequent
 this. **C H A P. VI.**
 as it was a means to let their Master always
 Containing Directions for Sanctifying
 the Lord's Day.

INTEND in this Chapter to
 give some particular Directions
 for the better Sanctification of
 the Lord's Day; and that Me-
 thodically and in Order; by shewing how
 we shou'd behave our selves from the Time
 of our Up-rising in the Morning, to the
 Closing of our Eyes at Night. But of some
 of these, I must say as I did before of Pre-
 paration for the Sacrament, that they are
 Matter of Prudence, and not Indispensible
 Duty: And therefore are to be observ'd or
 let alone, as they do either contribute to,
 or hinder us in the Performance of those
 Duties and Offices of Piety, that are Essen-
 tial to the due Sanctification of this Day;
 for provided the End be obtain'd, the Cir-
 cumstances of the Means are less considera-
 ble. So that I must desire the Reader to
 judge of, and follow several of the follow-
 ing Directions, according to this Rule; and
 always

always to remember, that whether he does *thus*, or *otherwise*, he shou'd do it, without Scruple to himself, and without censuring what another Person does, tho' contrary to what he does. For in Matters of this Nature 'tis a sure Rule that we shou'd always do that which, we believe, will tend most to our own Spiritual Edification, without regard to what other People do. *Discretion* (as I said before) *is the best Direction in the World.* In those things wherein neither God nor Man have pass'd any Obligation upon us, we must (as a Great Man * speaks) *preserve our Christian Liberty, and not suffer our selves to be entangled with a Yoke of Bondage.* For even a good Action may become a Snare to us, if we make it an Occasion of Scruple, by a Pretence of Necessity; binding Loads upon the Conscience, not with the Bands of God, but of Men and of Fancy, or of Opinion, or of Tyranny. Whatsoever is laid upon us by the Hands of Man, must be acted and accounted of by the Measures of a Man; but our best Measure is this; *He keeps the Lord's-Day best that keeps it with most Religion, and most Charity.* And according to this Rule, I desire the following Directions may be understood, and practised, and no otherwise.

* Bp. Taylor.
lor.

1. It is very proper that we shou'd Remember the Day before-hand, to the end we may (if conveniently we can) dispose of our Worldly Affairs, that they may be dispatch'd in convenient Time on Saturday Night, that so both our Selves and Servants may go to Bed in such time, that our Bodies may be well refresh'd with Sleep, and our Minds fitted for the Duties of the Day. Having dispatch'd our *Business* in such time, that we have not *that* to hinder and disturb us, we shou'd shake off (as much as we are able) the *Thoughts* of Worldly Things, and clear our *Minds* of Worldly Delights and Cares; and then, being *Retir'd* for that Purpose, should employ our selves in Meditations Preparatory for the Lord's Day; Repent of the Sins of the Week past, as particularly and seriously as we can; that neither the *Guilt* nor the *Love* of any one Sin may enter with us into the Holy Ground; that having thus wash'd our *Hands in Innocency*, we may with Peace and Joy compass the Altar of God. We shou'd Read, and Meditate, and Pray, in order to procure, preserve, and increase a holy, serious Frame of Spirit; that our Souls may take flight to Heaven at first awaking, and continue there, without descending, all the Day.

AND

AND sure no devout Person that is so happy as to live in a Place where there's afforded an Opportunity of attending upon the Publick Worship of God on the *Eve* of the Lord's-Day, will suffer himself to be hindred from joining in it, by any thing but unavoidable Necessity. *Saturday* * was an usual Season whereon many Churches, in the Primitive Times, solemniz'd their Religious Services. Indeed they did this upon a reason that is now ceased, in compliance with the *Jewish* Converts, who in the Eastern Parts (where this Custom most obtain'd) were very numerous; but certainly it will *always* be a good Reason for attending God's Publick Worship and Service on *Saturday*, (when we have time and opportunity) that it is a good Preparation for it on the Day following.

* Sir Peter King's account of the Worship, &c. of the Prim. Church, p. 126.

OF this our Pious Fore-fathers † were so sensible, that it was a Custom among them, at the Ringing of the Bell to Prayers on *Saturday* Evening, for the Husbandman to give over his Labour in the Field, and the Tradesman his Work in the Shop, that they might repair to the Church; which they thought a very proper Means to prepare their Souls for a more chearful and devout Attendance upon God's Worship and Service on the Lord's Day.

† Bishop Bailly affirms this in the Practice of Piety

2. IT is very fit that our Morning-Thoughts should not only be Holy, but suitable to the Occasions of the Day. We shou'd with Gladness remember, that this is the Morning of that Blessed Day on which the Sun of Righteousness so early arose, and chased away the Clouds of Fear. We shou'd rejoice that the Day of the Lord is come; and reflect on the excellent Work we are to be employ'd in; resolving to devote the whole of this Sacred Season to the Purposes of Piety and Devotion.

3. THAT we may have the larger time for our Private Devotions, 'tis convenient that we rise as early, as our Health and the State of our Body will permit. I say, permit. For otherwise, if the Toil and Labour of the foregoing Day do make it necessary, we may certainly sleep a little longer on the Lord's-Day Morning than at other times. For since the Sabbath is a Day of Rest, as well as Devotion; doubtless a good Man ought not to deny that Refreshment to himself, and Servants, which he is to give to his Beasts. But this Indulgence can with no Reason be extended to such, as not labouring hard the Week before, have no pretence for more Rest and Sleep on this Day, than others. They ought certainly to rise full as early on this Day, as they do on other Days,

or

or rather sooner; and not take Swinish Sloth and Laziness for that Holy Rest which God requires. I remember Judge *Hales* advises his Children to be up, at least, three Hours before Morning-Prayer. And any one that considers that there are secret Duties of Piety to be perform'd in the Closet; and private Duties in and with the Family, (if we live in a Family) and how much of our time will be necessarily taken up in providing for our appearance at the Publick Worship, will not think that too early; if we mean to go to the *beginning* of Divine Service, as we certainly ought to do. This is certain, that they are very blame-worthy, who on the Week Days can rise betimes to follow their worldly Businesses, but on the Lord's-Day do lie longer in Bed than ordinary, only to gratify their carnal Ease and Rest, without the least pretence of Necessity. This certainly is not to *keep holy the Sabbath-day*, thus to sleep away the first and chiefest part of it.

4. WE shou'd not be too long in dressing, but dispatch every thing of that kind, as soon as conveniently may be, that we may be free for better work. And to prevent the losing that time that must necessarily be so employ'd, we may spend it in Holy Thoughts and Meditations; or (after the

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* Mr. Bon-
nel.

the Example of a good Man *) in reciting some Psalms, which we may get by heart for that purpose ; or, as some others, in hearing some one read a Chapter in the Bible, or pious Discourse suitable to the Service of the Day.

5. WHEN we have made our selves fit for the Solemnity of the Day, we should immediately retire for secret Devotion : Such as Reading some Portion of the Holy Scriptures ; Meditation upon the Works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption, particularly the Resurrection of our Saviour from the Dead ; and God's Goodness to us thro' the whole course of our Lives, especially in preserving us to the Light of another of his own Days. Any, or all of these Subjects are very fit to employ our Meditations on the Morning of this Day.

IT will then be necessary to apply our selves to the Duties of Prayer and Praise. We should fall down upon our Knees, and after having begg'd the Pardon of our Sins, and the Grace of God, to enable us to subdue them; &c. we shou'd implore it also to assist us in all the Holy Services of the Day ; that we may perform them in such a manner, as that Glory may redound to God's Name, and some Spiritual Good and Advantage to our own Souls. And the
Lord's-

Lord's-Day being the Remembrance of a great Blessing, must be a Day of Joy, Festivity, Spiritual Rejoicing and Thanksgiving; and therefore it is certainly a proper Work of the Day to let our Devotions very much spend themselves in recounting the great Works of God, in remembring and celebrating his Mercies, and in singing Psalms and Hymns to his Honour and Glory: In which it were a great Decency (as Bishop Taylor observes) that a Memorial of the *Resurrection* shou'd be inserted, that the particular Religion of the Day, be not swallowed up in the General.

BUT I do not intend to give an account here of the Materials of which our *Prayers* and *Praises* shou'd be made up on this Day; they being all compriz'd in the *Forms* added to this Discourse; and which the Reader may make use of, if he have not better at hand.

6. Having thus prepar'd our selves for the Publick Worship and Service of God, we are next to take care that we attend upon it; and must make Conscience of being there at the very *beginning* of Prayers, as well as at the Sermon. Some there are, who flatter themselves that they sufficiently observe this Day as to the Publick, if they can but come to Church time enough for

for the *Sermon*: And so a great many come when the *Service* is half read, others when it is near a *Conclusion*; and they seem to think there is no great hurt done, if they do not lose the *Sermon*. But we shou'd consider that we come to the *House of God* not only to hear *Sermons*, (to be inform'd in our *Judgments*, and to be instructed in our *Duty*) but also to *Worship* and *Adore* the *Author of our Being*, to pay an *Homage* and a *Service* to him; as the *Exhortation* of our *Church*, before the daily *Prayer*, doth most pertinently instruct us. Where it reminds us that there are *four Reasons*, why we assemble and meet together in *God's House*, viz. (1.) *To render Thanks for the great Benefits we have received at his Hands.* (2.) *To set forth his most worthy Praise.* (3.) *To hear his most Holy Word.* (4.) *To ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the Body as the Soul.* Whence we may observe, that supposing that to hear *God's Word*, were nothing else but to hear the *Sermon*; (which by the by it is not; For the *Hymns*, the *Lessons*, the *Epistle* and *Gospel*, which are read out of the *Bible*, are *God's Word* as well as *that*, and in a more proper Sense than *that*;) Yet, I say, supposing that to hear *God's Word*, were nothing

nothing else but to hear the Sermon, he who is present only at the Sermon, neglects *Three Parts in Four* of his Duty, viz. *Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings*. Besides, it is to be consider'd, that the Prayers are necessary to prepare us for hearing the Word of God, and sanctify it unto us. It is not the way to profit by one Ordinance, to set it against another.

We should always therefore make it our Care and Endeavour to come at the Beginning of the Publick Worship. It shews an unwilling Mind to loiter, and be slow, in coming to the Worship of God. 'Tis because Men are loth to come, when they do not make haste to come upon the Signal given: And this must be a State of Mind very much indispos'd to Worship. The more willing we are, and with the greater desire we come to Worship, we may believe we shall be the more welcome with God, and his Blessings upon us will be the more free and ready, and the more large and bounteous. If we would have him make us joyful in his House of Prayer, we must be glad when the Day comes to Worship, and to hear the Summons to the Publick Assembly; as a very devout Soul says himself, *I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord.* Psal. 122. 1.

Besides,

Besides, as our Publick Service is wisely order'd for our Benefit and Advantage, so one part of it is serviceable to another, and the whole must be ordinarily most Profitable together: That which goes before, prepares for that which is to follow; and that which follows, is a good Improvement of what went before.

WE shou'd therefore endeavour to come even some time *before* any part of the Service is begun, like those that *thirst after God, and that long to appear before him.* This will happily give us time for Preparatory Prayer and Meditation, to compose our Thoughts, and raise our Affections; and to prepare us for the unspeakable Honour, Advantage, and Pleasure of Spiritual Communion with God. And sure no Devout Person will ever employ any part of that time which he has at Church, before the Publick Worship begins, in any other manner; but will spend it in reading some of the Psalms, (such as the 84th, 122d, &c.) or other parts of the Holy Scriptures, rather than in idle Chat, or gazing about; which serve only to make our vain and light Minds yet more unfit for God's Service.

7. WE shou'd take care that our Entrance into the Place of God's Publick Worship

ship be very grave and solemn; and such as becomes the Majesty of that most glorious BEING, in whose Presence we appear. We ought not, certainly, to enter into the Temple of the Lord, with no greater Awe, and with as loose Affections as if we were come to see a Play: We shou'd rather say to our Hearts, *How fearful is this Place! This is none other but the House of God, this is the Gate of Heaven.* We shou'd charm our Hearts from worldly, vain and impertinent Thoughts, when we come to Worship God: As a great and pious Statesman did, who, on such Occasions, wou'd lay off his Gown in which he administr'd his Office, saying, *Lie there Lord Cecil*; thereby implying, that he wou'd take none of the Cares of his Office with him, into the Presence of God. We should say the same to our Worldly Business, Cares and Fears, *Lie there till I have done with God*: And do as Abraham did, who left his Servants and Asses below the Hill, and took up nothing but a Holy Heart and the Materials of his Sacrifice with him thither. The very Heathens have left us an Example of this, who left their Shoes at the Temple Doors, to intimate that Worldly Affections must be left behind when we are going to be employ'd in

Gen. 22. 5.

in God's immediate Service. This Holy Awe and Reverence is what Solomon means, when he advises us, *Keep thy foot when thou goest into the House of God.*

8. WHEN the Publick Worship begins, we must devoutly join in it; and we always must remember, that since God is of a *Spiritual Nature*, we do nothing at all to the matter in Hand, except we Worship him in our *Souls and Spirits*. Our Hearts must be sincerely affected in all the Parts of the Service, or we do but *flatter with our Tongue*. And certainly 'tis not only a *vain*, but a *provoking thing to draw nigh to God with our Lips, when our heart is far from him*. And yet what more common than to neglect the Frame of our Spirits, and suffer them to wander, while we address our selves to God with all the external Appearances of true Devotion? How empty wou'd our Churches often be, if no more BODIES were present there than there are SOULS? And what abundance of sorry Service hath our God, that no Body sees? 'Tis true; where there is a devout Soul, there will be a Reverend Deportment of the Body; but there may be all the outward Signs of true Devotion, and yet a vain and trifling Spirit within. We shou'd therefore above all things look well

well to the Frame of our Hearts, and keep up in our Souls an Aweful Sense of God, in whose House and Service we are employ'd. We shou'd perform every part of our Duty with our *Spirits* and *Understandings*, and not offer God a dead Carcase, a *Body* without a *Soul*; for such Service will procure a Curse, instead of a Blessing: *Cursed is he* (saith the Prophet) *that doth the work of the Lord negligently.* Jer. 48. 10. He that only *seems* to serve God, does but exasperate him the more. An Eye to Heaven, and an Heart for the World; an humble Knee, and an haughty Spirit; a serious Posture, and a vain and trifling Soul, are *an abomination to the Lord.*

'Tis true, as we consist of Body and Soul, we must serve God with *both*; but 'tis the Worship of our *Souls*, which are the most excellent Part of our selves, that he principally regards: The Service of our Mind and Spirit is the best we can perform, and therefore most agreeable to God who is a Spirit, and the best and most perfect Being.

This is our Saviour's own Argument, *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must therefore worship him in spirit and truth.* God is a pure Spirit, present to our Spirits, intimate to our Souls, and conscious to the most secret

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tired Motions of our Hearts: Now because we serve the Searcher of Hearts, we must serve him with our Hearts; and when we make our solemn Approaches to him in the Duties of his Worship and Service, we must perform all Acts of outward Worship to God with a pure and sincere Mind; whatever we do in the Service of God, we must do it *heartily*.

Indeed, if we did worship God only to be seen of Men, a pompous and external Worship would be very suitable, and there would be no need to mind any thing more; but Religion is not intended to please Men but God, who is a Spirit; with whom *Shews* and *Appearances* signify nothing; and therefore it must be spiritual, real, and inward, or 'twill do us no Service.

A grave and serious Behaviour, a humble Posture and Prostration of the Body, is a proper Expression of Duty; but without the Impression and Attendance of the Heart, is double Iniquity, and flat Hypocrisy. 'Tis a remarkable Text that, Isa. 64. 7. *There is none that calleth upon thy name, because none stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* If we come to the Service of God, and do not excite and *stir up* our Souls to exercise our Graces, as a Man would blow a dull Fire; if we do not blow

up

up and actuate our *Faith, Love, Humility, Zeal, and Devotion*, but suffer our Hearts to run at random, God accounts all the rest, be it never so solemn, as nothing at all; as a Cypher without a Figure, it stands for nothing.

WHEN therefore we are in the House of God, engag'd in his solemn Worship, we must above all things *keep our Hearts with diligence*, and look well to the Frame of our Spirits. As the Divine Poet sings,

*Let vain and busie Thoughts have there no part,
Bring not thy Plough, thy Plots, thy Pleasures thither,
Christ purg'd his Temple; so must thou shine heart,
All worldly Thoughts are but Thieves met together,
To Cozen thee. Look to thy Actions well,
For Churches are, either our Heaven or Hell.*

AND in this manner must we perform all the several Parts and Offices of Publick Worship; taking care that our Devotions do not degenerate into a cold Formality, and an heartless or bare customary Performance of them; without that Reverence and Attention, without that earnest desire to receive what we Pray for, and to please God in all we do, which becomes those who approach the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth.

WE ought, whenever we are about to PRAY, to possess our Minds, with an actual awful Apprehension of the great tremendous Majesty we approach to ; with a due Reflection upon the Importance of those things we ask, which are of no less Consequence to us than the Life of our immortal Souls. We must Pray also with a firm Resolution to amend what we beg Pardon for, and to live so for the future, as we Pray that we may live ; with a deep inward Sense of all God's Goodness to us, and with Hearts full of Love to Him ; and with a sincere Desire of the Welfare and Salvation of all Men. We must Pray with that Humility which becomes Sinners ; and yet with that Faith and Trust in God, which becomes his Children, viz. That we shall receive, for Christ's sake, whatever we ask, so as we ought, with that due Attention, and Earnestness, and Perseverance, which may shew the great Concern we have in all these things.

THUS must our Prayers be qualify'd if we wou'd have them acceptable to God, and beneficial to our selves. For 'tis only the Language of the Heart, the *earnest Desire* and *inward Sense* of the Soul, which can reach as high as Heaven, and enter in-
 Lam. 3. 41. to the Ears of GOD. *Let us lift up our*
 HEARTS

HEARTS with our hands to God in the Heavens. For who is this (saith God by Jer. 30. 21) his Prophet) who hath engaged his **HEART** to draw nigh unto me.

IN like manner, when we are speaking or singing God's **PRAISES**, our Hearts must bear the principal Part in the Exercise, or it will be no better than a sounding Brass, or tinkling Cymbal. Bless the Lord, O my **SOUL**, (says David) and all that is **WITHIN** me bless his holy Name: Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits. When we sing God's Praises, our Hearts must go with our Voices, the one must be lift up as well as the other. This is what the Apostle calls singing with Grace in our hearts to the Lord: And making melody in our hearts to the Lord, when we are deeply sensible of God's Excellency and Bounty, and our Hearts abound with Love and Joy, in the Sense of them.

Psal. 107

Coloss. 3

16.

Ephes. 5

19.

The Fineness which a Hymn or Psalm affords,
Is when the Soul unto the Lines accords.

Herberg

He who craves all the Mind
And all the Soul, and Strength, and Time,
If the Words only Rhime,
Justly complains that somewhat is behind,
To make his Verse, or write a Hymn in kind.

AGAIN, when the *Word of God* is either READ or PREACH'D, we shou'd HEAR it with a resolution of Mind, to perform what we shall be convinced is our Duty; and with such a Submission of our Understandings, as is due to the Oracles of God; and with a particular Application of general Instructions to the State of our own Souls, that we may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In order to which, we shou'd give our Attention with Reverence, and take heed how we hear, lest our Negligence be interpreted as a Contempt of that Authority that speaks to us. We must not suffer vain Thoughts, or drowzy Negligence, to hinder our Attention; but should set our selves to it, as for our Lives; and be as earnest and diligent in Attending and Learning, as we wou'd have the Preacher be in Teaching and Instructing. If a drowzy careless Preacher (as one says) be bad, a trifling inattentive Hearer cannot be good. Let us remember that we are therefore excus'd from worldly Business on the Lord's-Day, that we may attend on his Service without distraction. Lydia's attending to the Words of St. Paul, accompany'd the opening of her Heart, and her Conversion.

Acts 16.
14.

AND

AND it will be very useful in order to fix what we hear in our Memories, to observe the Preacher's *Method*, at least the *Doctrine* or *Subject*, with the *Confirmation* and *Inferences* deduc'd from it; not grasping at more than we can retain, lest we lose all; but chusing out so much of the *chief* Matter, and that which most concerns us, as we find our Memories can bear.

IT is also very necessary to take particular notice of such Texts of Scripture, cited in the Sermon, as relate to the most important and concerning Parts of it. This may perhaps be esteem'd *old* and *unfashionable*; but there's great Advantage to be gain'd by it, as it will bring us more acquainted with the Knowledge of the Scriptures, and make us capable of judging what Regard is due to what is preach'd; for (as the *Bereans* did) *We must search the Scriptures, to see whether these things are so*, and not take all that is told us from the *Pulpit* upon trust: Besides, it will help to make what is said be better retain'd in our Memories, and very much assist us in recollecting what we hear.

9. We must in the next place take care, that the *Reverence* of our *Bodies* do always accompany the Devotion of our Souls, in

the Publick Worship of God. Our Bodies are an *essential* part of us, form'd after a most curious manner by our *Creator* ; Redeem'd by the precious Blood of our blessed *Saviour*, capable of Sanctification by the *Holy Spirit*, and of Eternal *Glorification* in Heaven ; and therefore we ought, in the Worship of God, to *glorify* him in our *Bodies*, as well as in our Souls, *which are his*. The *Second Commandment*, which forbids us to *bow down* to any sort of *Image*, does by Consequence require that we render *bodily Worship* to the true God, by which he is visibly *own'd*, *ador'd*, and glorified in the sight of Men. And therefore we may observe, that good Men in all Ages have not contented themselves meerly to Worship God with devout Thoughts and Passions, but with such external Acts of Religion, as either a Divine Institution, or the Custom of their Country, and the Practice of the Church, had made external Signs of Honour ; such as uncovering the Head, or putting off their Shoes, or bowing the Body, or kneeling, or prostration, or lifting up Eyes and Hands to Heaven, where God, in a peculiar manner, has his Residence, and displays his Glory. For this we have the ancient *Patriarchs*, the *Jewish Church*, *Christ*, and his *Apostles*, and

the *whole Christian Church* for many Ages, for our Example; and it will be hard to find any sort of People in the World, that pretended to any Religion, but took care of the external Solemnities, and decent Circumstances of Worship.

THE Church of *England*, in imitation of these Examples, and according to *St. Paul's* Direction to the Governors of the Christian Church, that *all things*, in *Divine* Worship, be done *decently and in order*, hath given us a Rule to direct our outward and external Behaviour in the Publick Service of God. We must therefore take great care, as we value the Character of good Members of this Excellent Church, that we comply with, and observe the Rules which the Church gives us, for our Behaviour and Gestures of the Body at the Worship. And this will secure us not only from those flaming Instances of Irreverence which are too common among us; but also from those lesser Indecencies, which tho' they are not of equal Guilt with the other, yet in some measure do obscure the Beauty and Comeliness of our Service.

THUS, as we are directed by the *Rubrick* of our Prayer-Books, we shou'd *kneel* at *Prayer*, and at the *Absolution*, which
con-

concludes with Prayer; and at the reading the *Commandments*, when we beg Forgiveness for our Breaches of God's Laws, and Grace to keep them better for the future. We are excited to this comely part of God's

Pfal. 95. 6. Worship by the *Psalmist* himself, *O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.* And according to this, our Blessed Saviour *kneeled down and prayed.* So St. Paul and his Friends *kneeled down even on the Sea-floor*

Luk. 22.

41.

Acts 21. 5.

and prayed. And in like manner St. Peter, St. Stephen, and other devout Persons mention'd in Scripture, *kneeled down* when they perform'd this Duty: And with great Reason; for this Posture does properly express our Reverence to him, to whom we make our Addresses, and is a very proper acknowledgment of our Dependance upon him.

It is therefore a very irreverent Custom, tho' too common among many, to sit or stand gazing about, in the time of Prayer. It wou'd be thought a very great Rudeness to an earthly Prince to do thus, when we are presenting a Petition, or intreating and expecting Favour from him. This was utterly unknown in the Ancient Church. *Eusebius* tells us, it was the common Custom of Christians to *kneel* at their Prayers; from

from whence they were call'd *Ingeniculations*, or their falling on their Knees. Nay, so far were they from *sitting* at Prayer, that for some Ages they did not allow themselves to do so while the Scriptures were Read or Expounded. Sitting was esteem'd among them, as a Gesture of great Irreverence, and such as was not to be endured in the Worship of God; yea, *Tertullian* severely rebukes the Custom of some in his Time, who hastily clapp'd themselves down on their Seats, as soon as Prayer was ended. If it be an irreverent thing (as he argues) to sit down before any Person for whom you have a great Veneration, how much more does it savour of Irreligion to do so in the Presence of God, as if you were weary of Praying to him? Let us then follow the Advice of the Divine *Herbert*.

*When once thy Foot enters the Church, be bare,
God is more there than thou; for thou art there
Only by his Permission. Then beware,
And make thy self all Reverence and Fear:
Kneeling ne'er spoil'd Silk Stockings: Quit thy State,
All equal are within the Churches Gate.*

WE are also directed to *stand* when we are Praising God in *Reciting* or *Singing* *Psalms* and *Hymns*, that being the proper posture for Thanksgiving and Lauds. And therefore we are call'd upon by the *Psalmist*,

Pfal. 184. *Psalmist, to Praise the Lord* **STANDING**
(not Sitting) *in the House of the Lord.*

2 Chron. 23. 30. *AND the Levites were appointed by David to STAND every morning, to thank and praise the Lord, and also at even.* Again, we are told, the Jews were

Nehem. 9. 5. *commanded by the Levites to STAND up and praise the Lord.* And in St. John's Vision of the Increase of the Christian Church to so great a Multitude, which no Man could number of all Nations, Kindreds and People; *he saw them standing before the Throne and the Lamb, and saying, Salvation to our God, and to the Lamb, &c.*

Rev. 7. 9, 10.

PSALMS of Praise and Thanksgiving are as much the Worship of God as Prayer, and therefore equally requires a Posture of Devotion. And there is no Posture so proper as *standing*, not only to *demonstrate*, but also *excite* the Elevation of our Minds in this more exalted Part of Divine Worship. The raising up our Bodies not only *signifies*, but *helps* towards the raising of our *Souls* too, in bringing to our remembrance the exalted Work we are employ'd in; wherein, proportionable to our State and Capacities, we join with the Choir of Heaven, in praising the Glorious God at present, as we hope to do for ever in a bet-

ter

ter World, in that *Sabbath that remains for the People of God.*

THE Primitive Christians, who at other Times *kneeled* at Prayers, laid aside that humble Posture on the *Lord's-Day*, and prayed *Standing*, to signify their Joy upon our Saviour's *Rising* from the Dead; and that they might do all possible Honour to that Day which our Lord had so remarkably distinguish'd, as is expressly affirm'd both by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*. And if on this Day *They* stood at their Prayers, what a shame is it for us to *sit* at our Praises, the most *divine* and *heavenly* Part of God's Worship?

THE Rubrick farther directs us to *stand* while we Repeat the *Creeds*, or make Confession of our Christian Faith; and this with very great Reason; the standing Gesture being very suitable at such a solemn Declaration of the Articles of Christian Religion, importing our Cordial Assent and Resolution to stand firm unto it. And indeed this is so properly signified (saith Dr. *Falkner**) according to the general Apprehensions of the World, that the Words both in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, which express the *standing Gesture*, are used in Scripture to signify an *Assenting with Resolution*†. And the like Idioms of Speech are in some other

* *Libertas Ecclesiastica*, p. 459.
† Deut. 25: 8.
1 Chron. 4. 32.
1 Cor. 16. 13.
2 Thes. 2: 15.

other Languages; whence *stare dictis* in Latin, to stand to our Words, in our Dialect.

ANOTHER Custom directed by our Church, is the *Bowing* at the Name of JESUS. And, to free this from the Imputation of Superstition, with which it has by ignorant People been charg'd, we must know that the Bowing is not intended to the very Name, which is the occasion only of the Worship, by putting us in mind of Him that is named, and of our highest Obligations to Him; as being JESUS, a Saviour, to whom therefore we address ourselves, and recognize Him as our only Saviour, by that especial and peculiar Act of Devotion. So that the Adoration then perform'd is to be understood to be wholly and absolutely directed to the Lord Jesus, as is declared by the Church in these Words. "When in time of Divine Service the Lord Jesus shall be mention'd, due and lowly Reverence shall be done by all Persons present, as it hath been accusom'd, testifying by these outward Ceremonies and Gestures their inward Humility, Christian Resolution, and due Acknowledgment that the Lord Jesus Christ, the True and Eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the World, " in

* Book of
Cannons.
Ann. 1663.

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“ in whom alone all the Mercies, Graces,
“ and Promises of God to Mankind for
“ this Life, and the Life to come, are fully
“ and wholly compriz’d.”

Some perhaps will enquire why we bow
at the Name of *Jesus*, rather than at the
Name of *Christ*, or *Saviour*, when we de-
sign to Recognize him as our only Saviour
by that Act of Worship? To which I shall
only say, that the Name of *Christ* doth ra-
ther signify his Uction to his Office, than
the Blessings which accrue to us by the
Execution of it: and the Name of *Saviour*
is also common to Him with the Father,
whereas the Name of *Jesus* is appropriated
to our Lord, and does include in it all the
Blessings we receive by him.

THERE'S another Thing which, be-
cause of its Analogy to this I have been
speaking of, I shall here mention; it is the
Custom of *Standing up* at the Reading of
the *Gospel* for the Day; and repeating a
kind of Thanksgiving after, it is directed
to; such as *Glory be to God most high*; and
generally to the same Sense, tho' in other
Words. Now it must be own'd as to the
latter, that this Form is not directed by our
Church, and therefore it can be no Fault
to omit it. The *Puritans* and *Brownists*
in Mr. *Hooker's* Days, it seems, took Offence
at

at *Standing* at the Gospel, as well as at that which our *Dissenters* seem to dislike a great deal more, I mean *Bowing* at the Name of *Jesus*: To whom he thus replies:

**Eccles. Po-*
lity, Book
5th. S. 30.
p. 248.

" * Now because the Gospels which are
" Weekly read do all Historically declare
" something which our Lord Jesus Christ
" himself either spake, did or suffered in
" his own Person, it hath been the Custom
" of Christian Men then especially, in
" token of the greater Reverence, to *stand*,
" to utter certain Words of Acclamation;
" and at the Name of *Jesus* to bow.
" Which harmless Ceremonies, as there is
" no Man constrain'd to use, so we know
" no Reason wherefore any Man should
" yet imagine it an unsufferable Evil. It
" sheweth a reverend Regard to the Son of
" God above other Messengers, although
" speaking as from God also. And against
" *Infidels, Jews, Arians*, who derogate from
" the Honour of Christ, such Ceremonies
" are most profitable. As for any errone-
" ous *Estimation*, advancing the Son above
" *the Father and the Holy Ghost*; seeing
" that the Truth of his Equality with them,
" is a Mystery so hard for the Wits of mor-
" tal Men to rise unto; of all Heresies, that
" which may give him Superiority above
" them, is least to be fear'd." This is

the

the Answer he gives to those who objected to the Church of *England* this Practice of *Standing at the Gospel*, and *Bowing at the Name of Jesus*. It seems, by his saying, no Man was *constrain'd to use them*, that tho' it was the Custom to do so, yet they were not *then order'd and requir'd* to be observ'd, by any *Canon or Rubrick*, as they have been since; and indeed the *Canon* which requires us to *Bow at the Name of Jesus*, was made in 1603, some Years after *Mr. Hooker* appear'd: And so might the *Rubrick* in the other Case, for any thing I can say, not having any *Common-Prayer-Book* so old by me.

BUT 'tis the *former* of these Customs with which we are at present concern'd. That which first introduc'd it, was probably the Practice of the *Primitive Church*, when (as *Dr. Cave* tells us) the People generally *stood* when any part of the *Holy Scriptures* were read, and all the while the *Sermon* continu'd. Their design in it was partly to express their *Reverence*, (in Imitation perhaps of the *Jewish Church*, where they always *stood up* at the reading of their *Law*;) and partly to keep their *Attention* awake and lively. In time, as People became less *Attentive*, and more *Ceremonious*, this Expression of *Reverence* was

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Nehem. 8.

5.
Nehem. 9.

3.

made peculiar to the Writings of the *Evan-
gelists*, which contain the History of our
Saviour's Actions, Sermons, and Miracles;
and upon that account they thought they
deserv'd a higher Respect than the Writings
of the Prophets and Apostles. Thus we
are told *Ignatius* affirms, that *the Gospel
hath this Excellency in it above the other
parts of Scripture, viz. the Presence of our
Saviour Jesus Christ, his Sufferings, and
Resurrection; for which reason it is more
valu'd than the Writings of the Prophets,
tho' they are all very good.* But certainly
as this Custom did not come into the
Church till long after *Ignatius*, there can
be nothing in his Writings that hath any
regard to it. The Words that are thought
by *Dr. Falkner* * to look that way, in his
Epistle to the *Philadelphians*, do only de-
clare the Excellency of the Gospel, above
all other Forms of Religion. The Learn-
ed Bishop *Wake* † has translated them
thus—*Howbeit, the Gospel has somewhat
in it above all other Dispensations; namely,
the Appearance of our Saviour, the Lord
Jesus Christ, his Passion and Resurrection.
For the beloved Prophets referr'd to him:
But the Gospel is the Perfection of Incor-
ruption.* All therefore together are good, if
ye believe with Charity. *Origen* indeed
does

* *Libertas
Ecclesia-
stica*, p.
464.

† *Bishop
Wake's
Genuine E-
pistles of
the Apost.
Fathers*,
p. 109.

does say, that the *Epistles* were not of equal Esteem among Christians, with those Writings of which it was said, *Thus saith our Lord and Master*. But as this was spoken after the Primitive Fervour was abated, so he said a great many other things, which no Body will care to say after him. The Truth of the Case is in short this: In the Primitive Church, while the Fervour of true Devotion did continue, they heard the Writings of the *Apostles* read with that high Esteem and Veneration, as if they had seen the *Apostles Faces*, and received those words from *their Mouths*. And in like manner they heard the words of the *Gospel*, as if they had seen *Christ himself*, and received these words from *his Mouth*. And therefore they did both with the highest Expressions of Devotion and Reverence, ever *standing up* when any part of these Holy and Divine Writings were read to them. And this Custom continu'd in the *African Churches* even until *St. Austin's Days*, as is manifest (says *Dr. Falkner* *) ** Libertas Ecclesiastica, p. 461.* from what he expresseth to that purpose; they then, it seems, stood both at *Sermons*, and all *Lessons* out of the Scripture. Afterwards, out of Tendernefs to the Weakness and Infirmary of many Christians, Liberty was granted to them, that they might

hear the *longer Lessons* or Portions of Scripture *sitting*; but as a Testimony of their Honour to the whole, they were requir'd at the reading of other Portions of Scripture to *stand up*. St. *Austin* tells us, how he gave counsel, and in some sort made supplication, that those who were infirm, and not well able to stand, might humbly and attentively hear the longer Lessons sitting: But in the same place he makes complaint, that this liberty granted only to the infirm in those *African Churches*, was taken by others more generally than was intended, or allow'd. And from these Persons has this Custom been handed down to us of later Ages; whereas it seems much more reasonable to imitate the Devotion and Piety of the more early Ages, who stood up at the reading every part of the Holy Scriptures, and thereby paid an equal Respect to the several Parts of God's Holy Word, which is all derived from one Original, the Holy and Divine Spirit, and is therefore of equal Authority and Obligation.

THE only thing that can possibly be said with any shew of Reason, for standing up at the Gospel, rather than the other Portions of Scripture, is, that since they are generally so long that it can scarce be expected

pected People will be brought to stand while they are *all* reading; it is an instance of Respect to the *whole Word of God*, to pay it in this manner, to a *short* part of it; and no part cou'd be more properly chosen for this purpose, than that wherein the Actions and Words of our Lord and Master do so frequently occur. But even this supposes it is still more proper to *stand up* at the Reading of *every part* of God's Word. And the truth is, this is so natural an Expression of Reverence upon this occasion, that not only *Jews* and *Christians* fell into it, but even among *barbarous Nations* such Respect was shew'd to what was dictated from God, that (we are told) *Eglon King of Moab, when Ebud told him he had a Message from God unto him, did rise out of his Seat.* Jud. 3. 20.

I will not indeed deny, but that the Church may allow a liberty to hear the *longer Lessons sitting*, while it insists upon this reverent Respect at the reading some *shorter* Portion of the Scripture; for this after all, is but a *Circumstance* of Religious Worship, a proper *indication* of (but not essential to) the Reverence of our Minds to the Word of God; and besides, (as is well observ'd by a Learned Man) the Apostles themselves did sometimes hear the

Scriptures read in the *Jewish Synagogue sitting*, as is evident from *Acts* 13. 14, 15, 16. Where we are told, *they enter'd into the Synagogue, and sat down, and after the reading of the Law and the Prophets Paul stood up.*

* *Meditations*, p. 266.

BUT notwithstanding this, I make no scruple to leave with the Reader Judge Hale's Advice to his Children in this Point, which is this * *Stand up at the reading of the Psalms, and at the first and second Lesson, and the Epistle and Gospel, the Hymns, and Creeds; so shall you avoid Offence, and give the same Honour to every part of the holy Scripture: But stand not up at the reading of any Apocryphal Book, if any happen to be read.* And as this is very agreeable to the Primitive Practice, so is it not at all *contrary* to the Rules of our own Church; for tho' we are *permitted* to Sit during the Reading of the *Lessons*, yet we are no where *requir'd* to do so; but may, if we please, *stand up* at the reading of *them*, as well as at the *Gospel*: And there is certainly (where People are able) as much Reason for the one as the other.

IT may not be amiss, now we are speaking of the *Modes and Circumstances* of Worship, to take a little notice of another Custom which prevails pretty much among

us,

us, that of turning towards the EAST when the *Craeds* are recited, and, by some, during all the time of *Divine Service*. This is a Practice very offensive to some, and a much greater Bustle has been made about it by others, than the thing in it self deserves. However, for the Information of such as wou'd know the *Reasons* and *Original* of it, and perhaps cannot otherwise be so easily inform'd, I shall lay before the Reader the best Account I can meet with of both; and then enquire, whether or not this Custom ought to be continu'd and observ'd in the Church of *England*.

Now 'tis certain, that the Primitive Christians did not only build their Churches towards the *East*, but also did constantly Pray with their Faces towards that Quarter. It was (says the Learned Dr. *Cave* *) so universally common, that there is scarce any Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; though not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. *Tertullian* says † that the Christians in his time worshipped towards the *East*; and to the same purpose speak several of the Fathers. And indeed this was so very common, and universally observ'd, that for their Worshipping towards this Quarter, and for their Religious Observation of the *Lord's-Day*, or *Sun-*

* *Primitive Christianity.*

† *Reeves's Apologies, Vol. I, p. 238.*

day, so call'd because dedicated to the Sun, they were accused by the *Heathen of Reverencing and Adoring the Sun*, as *Tertullian* tells us in the forecited place.

BUT tho' they agreed so well in the Observance of this Custom, they differ very much in the Reasons they give for it. *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks as if it was with respect to the similitude of the rising of the Sun, with our Spiritual arising out of the darkness of Sin and Corruption. *Origen* gives two Reasons for it; the one that we thereby denote our Diligence in the Service of God, in being more ready to set about it than the Sun is to run his course; the other, in regard that the *East* is the most excellent Quarter of the World. *St. Basil* says, that Christians did this with respect to *Paradise*, which, according to him, God placed in the *East*: And others, that it was upon account of God's being in himself, and stiled in Scripture the *True Light*. But among the several Reasons assigned by them for this Custom, that which seems chiefly to have prevail'd, was the Respect they had to *Christ* in their Prayers, whom they found stiled in the Prophets the *EAST*, according to the Translation of the *LXX*, which they constantly followed. This Version (says *Sir Peter King* †) arose from the

† *Constitution, Worship, and Ceremonies of the Primitive Church*, Part 2. p. 19.

the Ambiguity of the *Hebrew Word*— which signifies not only the *Branch*, as our Books render it, but also the *East*, as the *Septuagint* has it in those Prophecies, where 'tis used of our Saviour, and applied to him in the *New Testament*. Thus *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that herein they had respect to Christ, because as the East is the Birth and Womb of the natural Day, whence the Sun, which is the Fountain of sensible Light, does arise and spring; so Christ, the true Sun of Righteousness, who arose upon the World with the light of Truth, when it sate in the darkness of Error and Ignorance, is in Scripture stiled the East; and therefore our Prayers are directed thither. For this Reason also *Tertullian*, writing against *Valentinus*, calls the East the Figure or Type of Christ.

FOR this, and such like Reasons, the Primitive Christians usually Prayed with their Faces towards the East. But afterwards, when Superstition and Idolatry had over-run the Christian Church; and the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, with the Practice of Adoring and paying Divine Homage to the Elements of Bread and Wine, came in Fashion, this Custom was continu'd upon a different account. All the old Reasons were forgot, or laid aside, and the

the *Altars* being built, and the *Elevation* of the *Host* being made towards the *East*, People were taught to *Bow* themselves that way out of *Reverence* to *God*, who they were made to believe was present to their view in that *Quarter*.

* Speech in
the Star-
Chamber.

At the *Reformation* this Custom was generally laid aside, with that which gave occasion for it: 'Tis true it was still retain'd in some *Cathedrals*; and (as Archbishop *Laud* affirms *, in vindication of his Endeavours to restore it to general Practice;) by the Statutes of the Order of *St. George*, call'd the *Garter*, the *Knights* thereof are bound to do their *Reverence* towards the *Altar*; and so it continu'd from the time of *K. Henry V.* to the Reign of *King Charles I.* But that it could not then be justify'd by any *Canon* or *Rubrick* of our Church, is very evident from his not producing any in its Defence; and it wou'd be very unreasonable to make the *Statutes* of the *Knights of the Garter*, or the Custom of a few *Cathedrals*, a *Law* or *Rule* for all the People of *England*.

INDEED the Archbishop succeeded in his Design of Reforming the Church of *England* backward, so far as to procure the recommending this Custom by a *Canon*, made in the Year 1640, a part of which I will

will here set down. “ The reviving there-
 “ fore of this ancient and laudable Custom
 “ (namely of *Bowing* towards the *East*,
 “ when we *come into*, and *go out* of the
 “ Church) we heartily commend to the
 “ serious Consideration of all good People;
 “ not with any Intention to exhibit any
 “ Religious Worship to the Communion
 “ Table, the East, or Church, or any
 “ thing therein contain’d, in so doing—
 “ but only for the Advancement of God’s
 “ Majesty, and to give him alone that Ho-
 “ nour and Glory which is due unto him,
 “ and no otherwise. And in the Practice
 “ and Omission of this Rite, we desire
 “ that the Rule of Charity prescribed by
 “ the Apostle may be observ’d, which is,
 “ that they which use this Rite, despise
 “ not them that use it not; and that they
 “ who use it not, despise not those that
 “ use it*.

THE Canon, we see, does in a very
 soft and tender manner, *recommend* this
 Practice, but does not *enjoin* it; but if it
 had done *that*, it wou’d be of no force
now, being *Abrogated* by *Act of Parlia-*
ment, with all the rest that were made at
 that time. So that there can be no pre-
 tence for continuing this Custom, upon
 account of any Order, Canon, or Rubrick
 of

* Spar-
 row’s Col-
 lection of
 Articles,
 Canons, &c.

of the Church of England; on the contrary, the *Repealing* this Canon is a plain indication that the Sense of our Church is *against* retaining it. But this is yet more evident from a Clause in the *Act of Uniformity*, which Enacts that "No Rites or Ceremonies shall be openly used in any Church or Chapel, or other Publick Place of Worship, or in any College or Hall in either of the Universities, the Colleges of *Westminster, Winchester, or Eaton*, or any of them, *other than what is prescribed and appointed* in and by the *Book of Common Prayer*, &c. So that since this Practice of *Bowing* towards the *East*, or Communion Table, is not prescribed and appointed by the *Book of Common Prayer*, it is therefore expressly forbidden by the *Act of Uniformity*.

So that I cannot but wonder at Men who pretend to so much *niceness* in Conformity, and who, in things they don't like, will represent it as a heinous fault, to add one *Iota* to the *Liturgy*; who quarrel with a *Prayer before Sermon*, if it be not altogether after *their Model*, or be a little longer than their *own*; who make it a mighty important matter that the *second Service* be read at the Communion Table; and many other *Punctilio's*, for which they think

think they can find some *pretence* in our *Rubricks* or *Canons*; I say I cannot but wonder to see such Men contend for a Custom so expressly *condemn'd* by the Church of *England* it self.

I know they say they do it in Conformity to the Example of the *Primitive Christians*. Thus a Learned and Ingenious Gentleman * exclaims——

So little Knowledge of Antiquity, or so much wilful Disrespect to the best Christians, in the purest Ages, do some Men shew in condemning the most Primitive, and Reverential Ceremony, of Bowing towards the Table of the Lord. But has not the Church of *England* thought fit to leave out of her *Rituals* a great many other Customs and Usages that may plead *Antiquity*, as well as this? As the *Trine Immersion*, the *Chrism*, and *Exorcism* at *Baptism*; the *Water* mix'd with the *Wine*, in the *Holy Communion*; and the *standing* at *Prayers* on the *Lord's-Days*; and many others, that might easily be mention'd. I suppose this Gentleman himself, will condemn any one who shou'd go about to introduce these Usages into our Publick Worship, when they are no-where prescribed and appointed by the Church; and yet how easy wou'd it be to cry out in *these Cases*, as he does in the *other*?

* Reeves's
Marginal
Note in
Tertullian's
Apolo-
gy, p. 238.

UPON

UPON the whole Matter ; The Members of the Church of *England* are to form their Principles, and take the Measures of their Behaviour from the Rule that the Church itself hath laid down for their Direction, in her *Articles, Homilies, Liturgy, Rubricks, and Canons*. This, as grounded on *Scripture*, our great Rule, is the Path that our Constitution has mark'd out ; and as they who walk in it, that is, who worship God, in such a manner, as these prescribe, are truly *Church-men* ; so the rest, who deviate from the Rule, on either side, have no Title to that Name. They that will not come *up* to it are Dissenters on the one side ; and if any go *beyond* it, they are Dissenters on the other ; *i. e.* both of them *differ* in their Practices, from the Establish'd Rules of the Church. I will end all on this Subject, with the Remark of the Learned and Judicious Bishop *Stillington*.

* *Sermon*
of the Mis-
chief of
Separati-
on.

“ While we keep to *one Rule*, (says he*)
“ all People know what it is to be of our
“ Church : If Men set up their own Fan-
“ cies *above* the Rule, they charge it with
“ Imperfection ; if they do not obey the
“ Rule, they make themselves wiser than
“ they that made it. It hath not been ei-
“ ther the *Doctrine* or *Rules* of our Church,
“ which have ever given occasion to the
“ Enemies

“ Enemies of it ; but the Indiscretion of
“ some in going *beyond* them, and the In-
“ constancy of others in not holding to
“ them.”

HAVING thus, under the Guidance of *Rubricks* and *Canons*, given Directions for our *External Behaviour* in the Publick Worship of God ; I wou'd next take notice of some Indecencies and Miscarriages that are too common, and evident among us, upon such Occasions.

OF this kind is the saying the *Absolution*, the *Blessing* and the *Consecration-Prayer* in the *Communion-Service*, after the Minister ; which are Parts of our Liturgy, that peculiarly belong to the *Bishop*, or *Minister*, and none but they shou'd offer to repeat them.

ANOTHER is, the repeating with an *audible* Voice, any of the Prayers, (excepting such Parts as we are directed to say) which gives great Disturbance to the Minister and People in their Devotions, renders the Worship of God less Solemn, and is a thing very improper and misbecoming.

WE must be careful therefore to distinguish betwixt such Parts of the Publick Service as are proper to the *Minister*, and those in which the *People* are to join with an *audible*, but *humble* Voice. If we look in our *Common-Prayer-Books*, we shall find that
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the *People* are to be *silent* and *attentive* to the *Minister*, when he reads those *Sentences* of Holy Scripture, with which the Service begins ; as also in the following *Admonition* : And then all the *People* are to join in the *Confession* of Sin, and the *Lord's-Prayer*. But the *Absolution* (as I said) is to be pronounc'd by the *Minister* alone.

IN the Reading the *Lessons*, the *Commandments*, and the several *Exhortations*, the *Minister* is as *God's Mouth* to the *People*, and they ought to attend to that which is spoken with an *Awful Silence* : And in the *Prayers* and *Collects* he is the *Mouth of the People* to God ; and they ought to join in every *Petition* with the *earnest*, but *silent* Affections of their Souls ; and to testify their hearty Desire of that which is Pray'd for, by their Solemn *Amen* pronounc'd in the close of each Prayer.

AND here I wou'd observe, that we ought to give our AMEN with an *Audible Voice*, as we wou'd appear to desire a share in the Blessings pray'd for ; and the Neglect of this, is none of the least Mis-carriages in our Publick Worship. It was the Practice of the Church of Christ to do thus, even in the Days of the Apostles themselves ; as appears from the Words of

2 Cor. 14. St. Paul to the *Corinthians*, *How shall be*
16. *that*

that occupied the room of the unlearned, say Amen at the giving of thanks, except he understandeth what thou sayest? And in the following Ages of the Church, the People always testify'd their Consent to the Prayers put up by the Minister, in the same manner, as Justin Martyr * tells us in his Second Apology, speaking of the Prayers made at the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. When the Bishop (says he) has finish'd the Prayers and Thanksgivings, all the People present conclude with an audible Voice, saying Amen. And soon after he adds, The Bishop, as before, sends up Prayers and Thanksgivings, with all the Fervency he is able, and the People conclude with the joyful Acclamation of AMEN. And St. Basil tells us of his Church, that their AMEN was like a clap of Thunder. Another great Miscarriage in our Publick Worship, is Peoples going out of the Church, or preparing themselves for doing so, by taking down their Hats, and huddling about, before the Blessing is pronounced, as if they were glad to get away as from a Prison.

T H E R E was none of this rude disorderly departing the Congregation till the whole Worship and Service of God was over, in the first and best Ages of the

* Reeves's Translation of the Apologies, p. 118.

Ibid. 126.

Church ; but when the Warmth and Vigor of them abated, the Council of Orleans thought good to Establish the Primitive Devotion by this *Canon*, that “ when the
“ People came together for the Celebration
“ of Divine Service, they should not
“ depart till the whole Solemnity was
“ over, and the Bishop or Presbyter had
“ given the Blessing.

THESE and all other Instances of Indecency will be prevented, by a strict regard to our *Rubrick*, or the *Rule* given us in our *Liturgy* for our Direction, which is excellently fram'd for the securing our Decent and Reverent Deportment, in all the Parts of Divine Worship.

AND yet notwithstanding this excellent Provision, what flaming Instances of Irreverence and Impiety are there to be seen in most Congregations? The truth is, there are but few Christians who put on that true Gravity and Seriousness of Looks and Behaviour, as becomes the Presence of God, and the Solemnity of Religious Worship. You shall see some (as Dr. Sherlock expresses it) gazing about them with a roving and wandring Eye, as if they came only to see and to be seen, to observe every new Face, or new Dress and Garb, and therefore too often set themselves out with
that

that fantastick Gaiety, which more becomes a Playhouse than a Church.

YOU shall see others *talk*, or *whisper*, or *laugh*, to the great Offence and Scandal of all serious and devout Minds, as well as to the great Dishonour and Contempt of God, in whose especial Presence and Service we pretend to be engaged.

OTHERS, instead of worshipping God, *sleep* away the Prayers, or Sermon, or both, as if they were not concerned in either: It is possible indeed for very devout Men sometimes to be surprized with Sleep, but it is a great Indecency whenever it is so, and requires great care to prevent it in our selves and others; and is a great Contempt of God and his Worship, when it grows into a Custom, and Men as naturally dispose themselves to a sleeping Posture, as if it were the Design of their coming to Church.

YOU shall see others, even at the time they pretend to be worshipping God, paying their Regards and *Compliments* to Men, and *Bowing* to one another in the midst of Divine Service. This sure is a kind of Compliment that may very well, and ought to be spar'd; for it does by no means become the Place where we are, nor the Business we come about; it argues little Re-

reverence for God; or at least great lightness of Mind or Will to create it; and is certainly distracting both to our selves and others. We ought certainly to finish our Work with God; before we perform our Civilities to Men; and 'twill be time enough when that is done. And we may be sure that no Man that considers the Sacredness of the Place and Occasion, and that sees our Civility and Courteousness abroad, will ever think the worse of us, if we be more reserv'd, and less Ceremonious at Church.

1 Cor. II.
22.

To these several sorts of Persons may very well be apply'd that of St. Paul, with a little variation, *What? Have you not Houses to Laugh, to Whisper, to Sleep and pay your Compliments in, but despise ye the Church of God?* But these Men do not only despise the Church of God, but the Angels of God too, who do attend our Worship, and carefully observe our Behaviour in it, tho' we do not see them, as St. Paul plainly intimates, 1 Cor. II. 10. And, as St. Chrysostom observes, *If we reverence Men, much more the Angels of God.* Certainly, did Men believe that God and his Angels are present in our Assemblies, and take special Notice of every Action, and are greatly offended with a light and trifling Carriage,

riage, with any Gestures or Actions which unbecome so great a Presence; it would compose them to greater Seriousness and Devotion, and either make them afraid to come to Church, or more Reverent when they do.

THE truth is, if these Men had liv'd in the *Primitive Times*, they wou'd not so much as have been suffered to come to Church, or to enter the Assemblies of Christians: Men who betray such slight Thoughts of God, in a rude and slovenly Worship, as too many among our selves are guilty of, wou'd not *then* have been admitted to Christian Communion, or have been esteem'd of any Religion; and indeed, that can scarcely be call'd Religious Worship, which is not attended with all the solemn Expressions of Reverence and Devotion.

I make no doubt but these Men will freely condemn, and perhaps furiously revile such as Dissent from us, for stripping Religion of those useful and decent Ceremonies which we have retain'd; but certainly they themselves, who are so trifling in their Worship, are more worthy of Censure, than those they do so abhor for their Contempt of Order and Decency in the Church. For many of our Dissenters, tho' they re-

jest the Use of our Ceremonies, and neglect that external Decency of Worship which has been in use in all Ages of the Church; yet however they make a shew of great Seriousness in their Worship, and seem very often to be sensibly affected with it; and therefore this looks like Worship, tho' it want some external Solemnities, which may be thought needful: But when Men *stare and gaze* about them, *laugh or whisper*, and pay their *Compliments* to one another at their Prayers, and betray great Vanity and Lightness of Mind (to say no worse) instead of an awful Sense and Reverence of God; this is so far from making any shew of Worship, how *exact* soever they may be in their *Postures* and *Responses*, that it is downright *Prophaneness*: For the bare doing any thing in Religious Worship, such as *kneeling at Prayers*, or *standing up at the Hymns*, and *Creeds*, and the like, does not make it so much as an external Sign of Worship, unless it be perform'd with that *Gravity* and *Seriousness*, which is essential to all Religious Worship; *that* can't be accounted so much as external bodily Worship, which is perform'd without the least appearance of *external Devotion*.

AND as much as these People hate the *Dissenters*, I dare say their *own* trifling and irreve-

irreverent Behaviour, has brought a greater Scandal upon our Publick Service, than all their Arguments and Cavils; and nothing contributes more to the fixing the Prejudices they have conceiv'd against our Worship, than the horrible Indecencies, I may say *Impieties*, they observe Men guilty of, while they join in it, and pretend to admire it. We may fitly apply good old *Eli's* Rebuke to his Sons, upon another occasion, to these Men, *Why do ye so vilely? Ye make the Service of the Lord to be despised.* Some Mens Irreverence and trifling in God's Worship, is one great Reason that others scorn and condemn it.

LET us endeavour then to wipe off that Reproach of a *cold, formal* Worship; by expressing that grave, serious, and ardent Devotion which so much becomes all the true Worshippers of God, is so essential to Religious Worship; and (as I have shewn at large.) is so interwoven with all the Publick Offices of *our* Religion, which are admirably fitted to serve all the Ends of a grave and serious Piety.

10. WHEN the *Sermon* is ended, we shou'd kneel down and join in Prayer with the *Minister* for a Blessing upon it; for tho' *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, yet it is God only that must give the Increase.

And since the Minister of God is appointed to *Bless* the People in his Name, we must receive the *Blessing* from him, with great Devotion, and beg that we may be blessed indeed.

ii. AND that we may conclude our Publick Worship, in as Devout and Pious a manner as we began it, we shou'd continue on our Knees a little longer, to thank God for the Opportunity he affords us of waiting upon him in his Ordinances, to implore the Pardon of our Miscarriages in his Service, and his Blessing upon the Word we have heard preach'd, that, thro' his Gracious Assistance, it may be retain'd in our Memories, and practis'd in our Lives.

iii. IF after the Sermon the Minister goes up to the Holy Table to administer the Sacrament, we must continue in God's House, and receive it from him thankfully, for that End for which he gives it, in Commemoration of the Work of our Redemption, compleated on the first Day of the Week, by our Lord and Saviour's triumphant Resurrection from the Dead, I have before shewn how very proper a Duty this is for the *Lord's-day*, and what degree of Preparation is necessary to fit us for the due Performance of it. I shall only add here, that as this is the most solemn

part

part of Christian Worship; for it ought to be attended in the most solemn manner, with the utmost Reverence and Devotion, both of Body and Soul. And to promote these, and raise 'em to the highest pitch, we need only attend to the several Parts of the *Churches Office*; which contains the *Quintessence* of all the *Ancient Forms*, and carries so much of the *Primitive Simplicity*, *Gravity*, and *Piety*, through every part of it, that it has been acknowledg'd to be very full, and excellent, and said to be the *brightest Part* of our Service, even by those who are so unhappy as not to use it. And as for that one thing which most of 'em so much dislike, and some think so intolerable; I mean *kneeling* when we receive the Holy Elements, it is a Posture so natural and suitable, that it wou'd be no wonder if a devout Soul shou'd scarce think it low enough, and shou'd seem inclinable rather to bow down, or fall flat upon the Earth, than to stand or sit. For when we consider what the Motions of the Soul of a devout Communicant are, that it is humbled under its Reflections upon its many and great Sins, that it is swallowed up with the Sense of God's Love in Christ, that it is offering up and devoting its self to God; and does earnestly implore his Aid and Assistance

Assistance for the time to come, with a Holy Fear and Reverence: How can any one think a Posture *less* humble than kneeling can properly become a Man, performing so many Acts of Divine Worship? Or who shou'd wonder if the devout Soul shou'd seem almost naturally inclin'd, to *fall down yet lower*, before the Lord its *Maker and Redeemer*? But this is almost beside my present Design; which is to direct those who join in our Communion, how they may best perform this most solemn part of our Publick Worship, without a wild and ungovernable *Superstition* on the one Hand, or *Irreverence* on the other.

Now we must remember, that those *Graces* which are necessary in the *Habit* to qualify us for receiving the Holy Sacrament, are all to be *exercised* and *acted*, with the utmost Intention of our Minds, when we are actually employ'd in this Holy Service. And they are *Repentance*, *Faith*, *Devotion*, *Humility*, *Thanksgiving*, *Charity*: And in the last place a *particular, actual, and solemn Remembrance* of our Saviour's *Death*, and the *End* of it; and of the *Institution* of this *Sacrament*. Our Office for the *Communion* is so framed, that we need only to attend to the several
Parts

Parts of it, for the Exercise of all these Graces, and the due Discharge of all these Duties: And therefore in every Part thereof we ought to bend our Minds with the utmost Intention, and go along with every Word which the *Minister* pronounces, and observe the Directions he therein gives; which if we are careful to do, we cannot fail of being *Worthy Receivers* of these holy Mysteries.

I SHALL not here shew how our Hearts shou'd be affected thro' the several Parts of the Service; or how they do all excellently contribute to excite and promote in us those Graces and Virtues I have mention'd. This is done at large to very good Purpose in the *Fourth* Chapter of Mr. *Wesley's Worthy Communicant*, and in Dr. *Comber's Companion to the Temple*; but still in a way yet more accommodate to Vulgar Apprehensions, and not below the Observation of more refined Understandings, in Bp. *Fleetwood's* most Excellent little Book, entitled *The Reasonable Communicant**; which I cannot help thinking to be incomparably the best Book upon this Subject. All that I shall do, shall be only to point out some few Miscarriages, or Indecencies, which some very

* It is Printed for C. Harper, at the Flower-de-Luce against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet. Price Bound about 8 d.

very devout People are apt to fall into upon this Occasion, and to give some general Directions, in order to render our Behaviour *Rational* and *Becoming*, as well as *Pious* at the *Lord's Table*.

1. IN the first Place therefore, when the *Offertory* begins, we shou'd open our *Common-Prayer-Books*, and with our Eye (not *Voice*) read along with the Minister, and make what short Application we can to our selves, of what is read: We are there reminded of being *Charitable* to all that stand in need; and therefore must not fail of taking that Opportunity, and resolve to embrace all others that present themselves to us, of being so to our Power.

2. WHEN the *Prayer for the whole Estate of Christ's Church* follows, we must be sure to join in it, in Heart and Spirit; and never pretend to use any other Prayers or Meditations of our own, or out of any other Book, whilst the Minister is Praying the Prayers of the Church; for these are the best and properest for the present Purpose, and we must join with the Congregation in their Attention, and say the *Amen* with them, that we may reap the Advantage of that Common Fervency with which those Prayers fly up to God.

3. WE

ing. We should *silently* attend to the several *Exhortations*, for they are not only full of excellent Instruction, but well fitted to excite *holy* and *devout Affections* in our Souls; such as we ought always to have about us, in this *holy Service*.

When we come to the *Confession of Sin*, we must join with the Minister, both in Heart and Voice, for we are much concerned in it; but when the *Absolution* (which is next to it) begins, we must then hold our Peace, and attend to the Minister with all our Hearts. For nothing can be more absurd than for People to repeat the *Absolution*, word for word with the Minister; it shews so great a degree of Ignorance, that some would wonder why should fall into that Practice. The pronouncing the *Absolution* is the Work of the Minister, and belongs to Him alone, in God's Name. The People's Part is to be *silent*, and *attend*, and to say nothing but a most Earnest *Amen* to that excellent Prayer. And here I would by all means have it observ'd, that nothing fixes the Attention like to *Silence*; and therefore we should be sure in all our Publick Prayers to join with the Minister where we are directed, and at all other Times to be *silent*, to attend and make it our own by saying a hearty *Amen*.
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The observing Order and Decency in our Prayers is a great Help to Edification ; whereas the contrary begets Distraction, and disturbs both our selves and our Neighbours ; it offends devout and understanding People mightily, to hear Men and Women say their Prayers absurdly and indecently, holding their Tongues where they should speak and join ; and joining with the Minister aloud, where they shou'd only hearken, and say *Amen*.

5. WHEN the *Absolution* is over, we must attend most diligently to the *Sentences of Scripture* which the Minister is to read ; and when he calls upon us to *lift up our Hearts to God*, we must be sure not only to do it in Words, but in Deed, and great Earnest.

6. WHEN the Prayer of *Consecration* is over, (which the Minister is also to say by himself alone) there will be some time before we receive the Bread and Wine, which we must employ as well as we can, either in Prayer or Reading something proper to Meditate on, on that Occasion ; and to this Purpose we may furnish our selves out of some good Book of Devotion : such as Bishop Patrick's *Christian Sacrifice*, or Mr. Dorrington's *Familiar Guide to the Lord's Supper*. But we shou'd not be too much

much discourag'd if we cannot fill up all that Space with regular Devotion, or with close and earnest Meditation. We must do as well as we can; we must remember our own Offences with as much Sorrow as we can, and the Mercies of God to us in Jesus Christ with as much Thankfulness, and Love, and Joy; we must resolve in earnest to amend in what Particulars we find ourselves most faulty; and ask of God the Grace and Power to put those good Resolves in Execution; and that the Merits of this saving Sacrifice which we are now commemorating, may be extended and apply'd to us in the Forgiveness of our Sins, and all other Benefits of Christ's Passion. We may recommend to God's Mercy our Parents, and Relations, our Friends, yea and our *Enemies* too, and all the World: In short, we may do any thing (as the present Temper of our Minds most disposes us) that is good, and proper to fill up the Time, and employ our Thoughts till we Receive the Consecrated Bread and Wine.

7. WHEN we do *that*, we ought to raise our Devotion to the highest Pitch, and be very intent upon what we are about; but we shou'd at the same time take good heed, lest, while we are striving to raise our Hearts, we be lost, and bewildred. We should

should strive rather for a serious and composed Mind; and that our Devotion be rather regular, and equal, than transported, and exalted. When the Minister is delivering the Bread, we should attend gravely to what he says; and when he has repeated that excellent Prayer—*The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life*—we should then say softly a most hearty *Amen*. For is not that the Thing we come for, and desire? When he has said—*Take, and Eat this in Remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy Heart by Faith, with Thanksgiving*—We should take it, and whilst we are eating it, make some short, but devout Address to God, with which our own Thoughts, or some pious Book will easily furnish us. When the Minister delivers the Cup, and says—*The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy Body and Soul to everlasting Life*—we should then again say softly a most hearty *Amen*, for there it is most proper, and there it was formerly placed. And when he has said—*Drink this in Remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful*—We should take it, and drink very moderately, regarding neither Thirst, nor Pleasure

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in that Draught. And after we have done, make some such short Prayer, as we did after the Bread. And here I must say the *shorter* the *better* while we are at the *Rails*, because *long* Devotions *there* hinder other People from approaching, without any Advantage to our selves.

AND here too we shou'd be reminded, that we do not pretend to repeat either aloud, or softly, the Words which the Minister uses in delivering the Bread and Wine; for our Business is only to attend soberly to what he says, and to say *Amen*. Which I thought fit to mention, because an idle Custom has prevail'd, of People's repeating what the Minister says; to the Disturbance of the Minister, and to the Hindrance, I dare say, of their own Devotion, which would be further'd by a grave, and silent Attention.

8. BECAUSE it often happens, especially in great Congregations, that when we have Communicated, a considerable Space of Time remains before the *united* Praises and Thanksgivings of the Assembly begin again, it is fit we shou'd be prepared for the entertaining of our selves in some pious Manner, during that Interval. Whilst others therefore are Communicating, we shou'd chuse to Say some good Prayers, or

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Read some short Discourse, seasonable and proper ; or otherwise employ our Thoughts, so as may best excite in us such holy and pious Affections, and Resolutions as are fit for this Solemnity.

9. **W H E N** all have Received, and the Minister returns to his Prayers, we shou'd be sure to be ready to join with him ; nay, tho' we shou'd not have ended our Private Devotions, yet we must break them off, tho' in the middle, and join with the Publick ones, for that is better, and our Duty ; and so must we go on with him till he have made an End.

10. **A F T E R** which we shou'd still remain on our Knees, and in a short and silent manner ask of God the Forgiveness of all our Coldness, Wandring, and Indifference, or worser Thoughts, during the whole Performance ; beseeching him to preserve in us a lively Sense of his Infinite Mercies shewn to Mankind in Christ Jesus, and that we may go hence more and more confirm'd in Virtue, and holy Resolutions, and abide in his Favour to our Live's End.

T H U S have I very briefly laid down some Directions for our Conduct, from the beginning of this solemn Performance, to the end of it : In which, if I have given some Hints of Things, that, to Wise and
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Understanding People, may appear little and needless; yet they must be own'd to be useful, orderly, and tending to Decency and Edification in themselves, and but too necessary to great Numbers of even pious and good People, who for want of attending to them, appear absurd, and almost ridiculous, while they are engag'd in the most solemn Service in the World.

II. I shall only add, that in our return home we shou'd take heed of appearing *Sullen*, or *Morose*; and be ready to salute any of our Christian Brethren we meet with: And when we come home, shou'd retire some short Time for *Prayer* and *Thanksgiving*, suitable to the happy Occasion; with which we may richly be furnish'd in Bishop *Patrick's Christian Sacrifice*. After which we must be infinitely careful to answer our Vows and Obligations, to go on steadily in the ways of Virtue and Piety, and discharge all our Christian Duties constantly, and then we shall never be unfit for this Holy Sacrament, tho' it shou'd return much more frequently than it does. Such a Life will always render us *Habitually* Prepared; and the addition of some Prayers relating to this Matter, to our ordinary Devotions, and a little trimming of our Lamps, exciting our Affections, and stirring up our

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Graces,

Graces, will make us *Actually* Prepared for the Receiving the Sacrament as often as the Providence of God gives us Opportunity of doing so; and therefore we shou'd never omit any such, especially on the *Lord's-Day*; on which, it is so very proper, and seasonable a Duty. But to proceed.

13. AFTER the Morning-Devotions on the *Lord's-Day* are over, and we return to *Dinner*, we should chuse rather to Eat *sparingly*, than too *plentifully*, that we may be fit to attend upon the Afternoon's Service without Heaviness, and Dulness, which a very full Stomach is apt to incline Men to.

14. THE *Interval* between *Dinner*, and *Evening-Prayer*, is a fit Season to retire for Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, and Praise, as in the Morning: Unless where Men have the Charge of Families, and then that Time, or the greatest Part of it, will be best employ'd in *Family-Duties*.

15. BUT however, we must not suffer *them*, much less Laziness, or Profaneness, to hinder our Attendance upon the *Publick* Worship of God in the *Afternoon*, as well as in the Morning; where we must behave our selves, as is before directed.

The *Primitive* Christians did use to Assemble for *Publick* Worship, on *both* Parts of

of the Lord's Day, and had Prayers and Sermons in the Afternoon, as constantly as in the Morning.

THIS St. Chrysostom assures us of in an Homily on this very Subject, in Commendation of those who came to Church after Dinner, and that, as he tells them, in greater Numbers than before; who, instead of Sleeping after Dinner, came to hear the Divine Laws expounded to them; instead of walking upon the Exchange, and entertaining themselves with unprofitable Chat, came to hear the Words of our Lord and Master, and stood among their Brethren to converse with the Discourses of the Prophets. And this he tells them he put them in mind of, not that it was a Reproach to Eat and Drink; but having done so, it was a shame to stay at home, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities.

FROM which it appears, that they had not only Prayers, but Sermons also, in the Afternoon; and the same (says Dr. Cave, from whom I have transcrib'd this of St. Chrysostom) it were easy to make good from several Passages in St. Basil, St. Augustine, and Others, who frequently refer to those Sermons, which they Preached in the Morning.

IN Imitation of their Example, and to prevent some Inconveniencies which follow from the want of it ; it is a thing much to be desir'd, that this Custom of Preaching *both* Parts of the Lord's-Day, did generally and every-where obtain in the Church of *England* ; or at least, that the Prayers of the Church, shou'd be always accompany'd with some *Exposition of the Catechism*, which wou'd be rather of more use than the common Manner of Sermonizing ; tho' 'twou'd be no difficult Thing to compose the Afternoon-Sermons on *Catechetical* Heads, which perhaps wou'd please some People better, and *instruct* 'em as well. But this is a Digression : That which I wou'd say, is, That if we live in Places where we have not the Advantage of either of these Ways of Instruction, on one Part of the Lord's-Day, but only the Prayers of the Church ; it is notwithstanding, our Indispensible Duty to attend upon them. For since the *Publick* Worship of God is one of the greatest and most proper Duties of the Lord's-Day, to neglect the Prayers of the Church, which are the principal Part of the Divine Worship, must needs be a very great Fault.

'T IS true, to hear the Word of God read or preached, is so far an Act of Worship

ship too, as it signifies an Acknowledgment of his Authority over us, and our Desire to be instructed by him : But this is but a *Secondary* Act of Worship, which consists in hearing God speak to us either immediately in his inspired Word ; (which, by the way, we may do, when there are Prayers only, as well as when there is a Sermon ;) or mediately, by those Men whom he has Authorized and Qualified for the Instruction of his Church : But the Worship of God properly consists in our offering something to God, the Sacrifices of Prayers and Thanksgivings, which are highly pleasing to him, when they are offer'd up by a Devout Soul, in the Name and Merits of our Great High-Priest and Mediator Jesus Christ.

It is evident therefore from hence, that the *Publick Prayers* are the principal Part of Divine Worship ; for there we confess our Sins to God, and beg his Pardon, and receive a *Ministerial* Absolution from the Mouth of his Minister ; there we Praise him in Divine Hymns and Anthems, and put up our joint Petitions, and Thanksgivings to him ; and this is, in the strict, and most proper Sense, to worship God, because it is our Address to Him in Supplications, Prayers, and Praises.

So that those who neglect and slight the Opportunities of Publick Prayers, when there is no Sermon to invite their Presence, plainly discover, that they prefer pleasing their Curiosity, with hearing some new Discourse, before the more solemn Acts of Worship; which is a great Sign that they hear to very little Purpose, when the End of Hearing is Practice, and the most excellent Part of Practical Religion is the immediate Worship of God. *Hear Divine Herbert.*

*Twice on the Day his Due is understood;
For all the Week thy Food so oft he gave thee.
Thy Cheer is mended; bate not of thy Food,
Because 'tis better, and perhaps may save thee.
Thwart not the Almighty God: O be not cross,
Fast when thou wilt, but then, 'tis Gain, not Loss.
Resort to Sermons, but to Prayers most:
Praying's the End of Preaching. O be drest.
Stay not for th' other Pin: Why, thou hast lost
A Joy for it worth Worlds. Thus Hell doth jest
Away thy Blessings, and extremely flout thee;
Thy Cloaths being fast, but thy Soul loose about thee.*

16. WHEN the Evening-Service is over, it will be necessary for us again to retire in secret, that we may close this Holy-day, as devoutly as we began it. We shou'd then examine ourselves concerning our Behaviour in God's Service, review our several Performances both in Publick and Private,

and

and note our Failings and Miscarriages, that we may lament them ; and take notice of the Good we have done, and received, that so we may bless God for it. To our ordinary Devotions we shou'd add *Prayers*, and *Praises* proper for the Day : Implore especially the Pardon of what we have done amiss, and God's Acceptance of, and Blessing upon what we have endeavour'd in his Service. And *Praises* and *Thanksgivings* shou'd always make up one great Part of our Devotions on the *Evening* (as well as *Morning*) of this Day of Blessings. We shou'd never fail to offer up our Solemn Praises for *Creation* and *Redemption*, and that plentiful Provision which God hath made for our Temporal and Eternal Happiness ; especially for the Mercies of this Blessed Day ; the Merciful Release he hath given us, from the Labours of our Bodies, and the Cares of our Minds ; his House open to us, and the Food of our Souls set before us ; the Word of Salvation sounding in our Ears, and the Spirit of Grace striving with our Hearts, helping our Infirmities, and enlightning our Minds. For these, and all his other Mercies, we shou'd devoutly Bless God by Singing a Psalm, or Hymn, to his Glory. But of this the Reader will meet with more, not only in the annexed

annexed *Forms of Prayer and Praise*, but in the following Chapter of this Discourse; only let me add, that *a joyful Sabbath is the Suburbs of Heaven*.

THUS shou'd we conclude this Holy Day in the private Exercises of Piety, *not sooner* than we are wont to do our other Days, and long for the return of it.

17, THE last Direction I shall give for the Holy Observation of the *Lord's-Day* is this, that we carefully refrain from every thing that will hinder or interrupt us in the Performance of the several Duties I have mention'd, or indispose us for the Spiritual Exercises of it.

WE shou'd therefore to be sure (on all the Parts of the *Lord's-Day* that are vacant from Publick Worship) abstain from all unnecessary Worldly Business, from all Sports, Idleness, and needless Diversions.

WE ought certainly to avoid all Publick Places of Entertainment and Resort (such as Taverns and Coffee-Houses, or Publick Walks) all such Visits as are employ'd only in idle Chat, or worse Discourse; and shou'd chuse rather to be *alone*, than in Company and Conversation where we cannot Edify one another.

THO'

THO' we must not be sowe and morose, yet in all our Speeches and Actions, there shou'd be no *Lightness* or *Vanity*; we shou'd use no *foolish jestings which are not convenient*, or indulge our selves in a *Libertine Manner* of telling Stories, and talking of nothing but *Worldly Affairs*. For tho' we may on this Day be *innocently chearful*, and rejoyce in the Blessings of God; yet we must not only abstain from *vile Thoughts and Words*, but even from a too great liberty in *fruitless and vain ones*; *Thou shalt call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasures, nor speaking thine own words.* Isa. 58. 13.

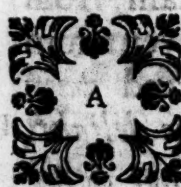
IN short, we shou'd endeavour that our Carriage and Speech be such as the Day is, *serious*, and yet *chearful*; *sacred*, and yet not *Superstitious*; without indulging to *Libertinism* and *Prophaneness* on the one hand, or a *Jewish* and *Pharisaical Rigour* and *Nicety* on the other; having always in view the End and Design of the Institution, which is to further the *Glory of God*, and the *Happiness of Men*: We may be sure therefore that it is a very great Fault to do or say any thing inconsistent with either — But of this I shall treat more at large in a Chapter by it self,

CHAP.



C H A P VI.

*Concerning the proper Duties of the
Lord's-Day, in the Intervals of
Publick Worship.*

 **A**S the Publick Worship and Service of God is that by which principally the Lord's-Day is sanctify'd, so there are other more private Duties that ought to fill up those Portions of Time which are not so employ'd. Every part of this Sacred Day is the Lord's, and to be dedicated to his Honour. What our Saviour said to his Disciples concerning the Loaves and the Fishes, *Gather up the fragments, let nothing be lost*; he seems to speak to us concerning this Holy Day; gather up the Parcels thereof, let no part of the Day be lost, no not the least Minutes, which are precious as the smallest Filings of Gold. My Design in this Chapter therefore, is to give some Account of those Duties which are peculiarly proper on the Lord's-Day, (*for all things are beautiful and excellent in their season*)

season) in which we may employ our selves in those Spaces, which in the *Morning*, at *Noon*, or the *Evening* of it, are left free from Publick Worship. And here,

I. WE shou'd employ some of this vacant time in *Reading* the Holy Scriptures, and other good Books. And as the Scriptures themselves must always have an Infinite Preference to all other Compositions; so those Books are the best and most worthy of our Regard, which serve best to explain, illustrate, and recommend those Divine Writings to us; and are most apt to exalt and raise up our Spirits to a high Admiration, and an answerable Search and Study of them. Reading Books of this kind, will not only enrich our Understandings, and warm our Affections, but be a means of rendering our Attendance on Publick Instruction more profitable and delightful.

II. Some of this vacant Time shou'd also be employ'd in *Meditation*. And here I shall hint some Subjects for our Meditations, which, tho' they are not improper at any Time, seem more especially seasonably on the Lord's-Day. As,

1. The

1. **THE** Works of Creation, and Providence. The wise Works of God are always the proper Objects of our Praise; and the *Lord's-Day*, is of all other, the most proper for this Work of Praise and Thanksgiving. Now under the Gospel, since Christ was clearly reveal'd, we have indeed *new* matter of Praise and Thanksgiving. But as God has given us *Christ*, so he has given us our *Beings*; and by his Providence makes Provision for the Happiness of them. And we are not so to remember our *Preserver*, as to forget our *Creator* and *Redeemer*. The Goodness, and Power, and Wisdom of God, which appear in the Creation and Government of the World, ought still to be matter of Admiration and Praise to *Christians*. It may be, for ought I know (says Mr. Ray) part of our Business and Employment to Eternity, to contemplate the Works of God, and give him the Glory of his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, manifested in the Creation (and Government) of them. I am sure it is part of the Business of a Sabbath Day, and the Sabbath is a Type of that Eternal Rest. For the Sabbath seems to have been first Instituted for a Commemoration of the Works of Creation; from which God is said to have rested on the Sabbath-Day.

On

ON the Lord's-Day therefore, we ought always to let the Goodness, Wisdom, and Power which shines forth in the Beauty and Order of the Creation, be one Topick of our Affectionate Contemplation.

IF we consider the World in its *whole* and *entire* Frame, there appears vast *variety* and exact *harmony* every where in it. With what Beauty, and Art, and Contrivance are particular Creatures made; and how are the several parts of this great Machine fitted to each other, and make a *regular* and *uniform* World? How are all particular Creatures fitted for the Use and Purpose of their several Natures, and yet made serviceable to one another, and have as mutual a Connection and Dependance as the Wheels of a Clock.

IF we survey the World in its several *Parts*, we shall discover still farther Reason to admire the Glorious Perfections of the great Creator.

IN the *Heavens* we may behold the *Sun* to Rule by Day, and the *Moon* and *Stars* to Rule by Night, in exact Motion, curious Order, plac'd in a due distance from the Earth, for its Use and Conveniency; producing strange Effects in the *Air*; *Wind* and *Rain*, *Thunder* and *Lightning*, *Snow* and *Hail*, *Heat* and *Cold*, Variety of Seasons,

sons, Weather and Tempers, all affecting the *Earth*, which we may behold cloathed and adorned with *Plants* of various sorts, and admirable Beauty and Usefulness; furnish'd with great store of living *Creatures* of several Minds and wonderful Make, from the almost invisible *Mite*, to the prodigious *Elephant*; with Bowels full of *hid Treasures*, and useful *Minerals*; with full Veins of living *Waters* circulating in *Springs*, *Fountains*, *Rivers* and *Seas*; which have all their Use, and all their peculiar Beauty and Wonders (worthy of our exact Scrutiny and Consideration) singly for themselves, speaking out the Praises of their Author; and all of them together in one universal Consort, with one Harmonious Voice proclaiming how wonderful God's Works are, in what *Wisdom he hath made them all!* and how full the Earth and World are of the Divine Riches, Mercy and Bounty!

BUT the Perfections of God appear nowhere so visibly, and in less room, than in our *selves*. When God had finish'd the other Parts of the Creation, he was pleas'd to set up MAN as a Picture of himself in it, to be a Memorial of the Workman.

GOD has bestow'd more abundant Honour upon us made after his own Image, the Top and Perfection of this visible World,

World, the Effect and Result of Divine Wisdom, and the *Creature of his Counsel*; consisting of a *Body fearfully and wonderfully made*; of a *Soul* so subtilly compos'd, as to be Inscrutable even to it self; the *Capacity* and *Union* of which with the Body, is the *Miracle* of the World, tho' *familiar* to our selves. So that we may fitly apply what is said of the *Wisdom* of God, to his Power and Goodness also: The Wisdom, and Power, and Goodness of God shines forth in all the Works of Creation, in the Heavens and Clouds above, in the Earth, and the Fields, and the Fountains of the great Deep, *But their delight is with the* Prov. 8. *Sons of men.*

THUS shou'd we employ our selves in Contemplating the Works of *Creation*; and in the same manner we ought to consider and admire those of *Providence*, whereby we, and what belongs to us have been preserv'd, and the Comforts and Conveniencies of this Life are continu'd to us.

GOD only who made the World can preserve and govern it as it is; *For Conservation is a continual Creation.* It will be a very delightful Entertainment to us often to consider and meditate on the Divine Providence, on that amazing Wisdom that

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Rules and Directs all things here below.

WE shall then see all things in the World directed to operate to some End; and nothing superfluous, useless, or wanting to answer even its very best End. We may behold the Infinite Wisdom and Power of God, bounding the Surges of a Tempestuous Sea; sustaining the Globe of the Earth in its proper Place; keeping Order and Harmony among Qualities and Humours most diverse and contrary to one another; restraining and changing the Exorbitant Passions of Men; infatuating evil Counsels, and turning them against the Contrivers thereof, making them subservient to the best Purposes, and the very Ends they were design'd against. We may discern an equal and steady Hand Governing the World, and the Affairs of particular Persons, when the Motions of things seem most Excentrick and Exorbitant; and bringing Good out of Evil, and Order out of Confusion, when they are so perplex'd, that 'tis impossible for any thing but a Wise and Powerful Providence to disintangle them.

THESE are some of those many Instances of the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of the Divine Providence, and it becomes

comes us to take notice of them, and Praise God for them : For *whofo is wife will ob-serve these things, and they shall thereby understand the Loving-kindness, as also the Wisdom and Power, of the Lord.* Pfal. 107.
43.

BUT the Consideration of God's Works is a noble and delightful Entertainment, sufficient for the longest Life, and what may last us an Eternity. And therefore as 'tis impossible to say all, so I have endeavour'd to say as much as I well could, in the hints I have given hereof ; which I intend as an Incitement to a more exact Enquiry into, and Observation of these *wonderful Works of God*, which ought always, but more especially on the Lord's-Day, *to be had in Remembrance.*

2. ANOTHER proper Subject for our Meditation on this Day, is the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ, and more particularly his *Resurrection* from the Dead. The Change of the *Jewish Sabbath* to the *first Day* of the Week was upon this very account, to be a Memorial of the Love of God and our Saviour, in recovering us from that State of Misery and Ruin into which we had plung'd our selves. We have great Reason to Admire and Acknowledge the Goodness of God to us in our Creation ; but *Redemption* chal-

lenges the Heights of Love, and Joy, and Wonder; without which our *Beings* wou'd have serv'd only for the Foundation of our Misery.

ON this Day therefore, instituted in Honour of our Saviour and Redeemer, we shou'd call to Mind his noble Acts, and shew forth his Praises; reflect upon his great and astonishing Love, and recount all his Victories and Triumphs over Sin, and Death, and Hell, and him who had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil. We shou'd meditate upon this great and amazing Goodness of God to Mankind, who when we were in open Rebellion against him, entertain'd Thoughts of Peace towards us; and when he pass'd by the fallen Angels, set his Affections and Love upon the sinful and miserable Sons of Men. This is a Circumstance that enhances the Mercy of this Redemption, and makes it wonderful beyond all Thought or Conception. When we reflect upon that dreadful Spectacle, *lapsed Angels*, lying in Chains of Darkness for ever, and that for *one Sin*, we may well stand and admire and wonder at the Salvation of *Men*, in which *Worms* are as it were *Angeliz'd*, and little Lumps of corrupted Dust are first Refined by Grace, and then Transfigur'd into Glory. This

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is a Dispensation enough to puzzle and non-plus, not only our Expressions, but our Apprehensions too ; not only our Apprehensions, but our Admiration it self. But, O Lord! we can neither keep Silence, nor speak out thy *Love* ; it is so great and so infinite, that it arrests our Thoughts, and cramps our Tongues, and leaves us no Relief but that Expression of the Apostles ; *O the depth of the Riches both of the Knowledge and Wisdom of God! &c. O the boundless Dimensions of the Love of God, which passeth Knowledge!* Rom. 11. 53.

HEREIN is the Love of God perfected, that as he hath made all Creatures both *above* and *below* us, subservient and instrumental to our Subsistence, and Preservation ; so for the Ransom of our *Souls*, from Eternal Ruin and Misery, He hath not spared his own Son, but hath given him up to Death for us. This is a Dispensation of all Love and Mercy, which Heaven and Earth shou'd ring with the Praises of, and *Eternity* it self will be short enough to admire it in.

BUT more especially we ought on this Day to Meditate upon, and Celebrate our Redeemer's Power and Conquest over Death by his Triumphant Resurrection. *He was Dead indeed, but is Alive again, and bath*

the Keys of Hell and Death. Our Lord is Risen again, and become the First Fruits of them that Sleep. And now in the Death of our Saviour, we see the Eternal Conquest of Death and the Grave; for by Death he hath destroy'd him who had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil; and delivered them, who thro' fear of Death, were all their Life-time subject to Bondage. O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory! Thanks be to God who hath given us the Victory, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord!

THUS shou'd our Souls Triumph in a Risen Saviour, in this Mighty Conqueror, whom all the Powers of Darkness could not detain Prisoner, our Crucify'd Lord, who Died with Scorn and Ignominy, but Rose again with Power and Glory; and being Risen, Dieth no more; Death hath no more Dominion over Him.

THESE are very seasonable Meditations upon this Day, on which our Redeemer did thus Arise from the Dead. He chose that Time to Die when the Passover was slain; that Time wherein Adam was Created, the Sixth Day of the Week at Evening. He chose that Time for his Body to Rest in the Grave, and for his Soul to Rest in Paradise, wherein his Father Rested from all the

the Great Work of *Creation*, the *Seventh* Day of the Week. And he chose that Day to *Rise* again which his Father chose to *Begin* the Creation, the *First* Day of the Week; that the same Day might bear the Inscription of the Creation, and of the Restitution of the World: and that was on that Day God brought *Light out of Darkness*; so this *Light*, the *Light of the World*, and which *coming into the World*, enlighteneth every Man (as *St. John's* Words are) shou'd arise from the Land of *Darkness*, the *Grave*: This therefore is the Day which the Lord hath made, let us be glad, and rejoyce therein: This is that Blessed Day which brought glad Tidings of great Joy, our Saviour's second Birth-day to a more glorious Life; the Day of the *First Fruits* of those that slept; the Day that brought *Life and Immortality to light*, and gave us assured Hope in God, that it shall be to us according to *Jesus's* Word.

THAT our Lord is Risen, is good Tidings of great Joy indeed, and deserves our Celebrations of Praise, no less than his Birth, which was attended with the Congratulations of Angels. The News of it was so surprizing to the *Disciples*, that it seem'd to them to be too good to be true, and they believed not for joy. And what

Joy is it to us, who are equally assur'd of its *Truth*, and *Goodness*! Whereby we see our last Enemy destroy'd, our Champion a Conqueror, our Ransom paid and accepted, Condemnation reversed, our Redemption compleated, and the Kingdom of Heaven open to all Believers.

3. ANOTHER proper Subject for our Meditations on the Lord's-Day, is the Glory and Happiness of Heaven. When can we more seasonably Contemplate on that *Rest which remains for the People of God*, than on this Day of Rest, that doth Typify it to us? It being a Day appropriate to Worship and Spiritual Duties, we shou'd never exclude this Duty which is so eminently Spiritual. "I think verily (says a "very excellent Writer) this is the chief "Work of a Christian Sabbath, and most "agreeable to its positive Institution. What fitter Time to converse with our Lord, than on that Day which he hath appointed for such Employment, and therefore call'd it *The Lord's-Day*? What fitter Day to ascend to Heaven, than that on which our Lord did Arise from Earth, and fully triumph'd over Death and Hell, and took Possession of Heaven before us? The fittest Temper for a Christian is (with St. *John*)

John) to be in the Spirit on the Lord's-Day; and what can bring us to that Ravishment in the Spirit, like the Spiritual beholding our Ravishing Glory? Surely, tho' an outward Ordinance may delight the Ear, or please the Fancy; yet nothing but the Views of God, and the Communications of his Love, can Ravish the Soul.

LET Heaven then have a greater share in our Sabbaths, where we must shortly keep our Everlasting Sabbath. Let us never fail to employ some Part of this Holy-Day in the Believing Thoughts, and Contemplation of the Happiness of that World, where we hope to live for ever.

FULLY and Clearly to comprehend the Nature and Greatness of our Future Happiness, is beyond the Capacity of a Mortal Man; *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, 1 Cor. 2.9. neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive what God hath prepar'd for those that love him.* But for our Encouragement and Comfort in this Vale of Tears, God is pleas'd to afford us a Glimpse of our approaching Glory; having in the Scriptures given us an Account not only of the Greatness and Compleatness of it in general, but of many Particulars wherein it will consist.

WE

WE are assur'd that the Saints in Heaven are in the Presence of the Fountain-Good, receiving immediately from himself the Testimonies and Communications of infinite Love. They are out of the reach of Sin, and Fear, and Sorrow. Their Joy is pure without allay, their Pleasure solid and abiding, not likely to leave them in discontent and distast; their Holiness is perfect and compleat; their Faith is turn'd into Sight; and their Hope into Enjoyment and Fruition. And all this Joy and Happiness is *Eternal*, and shall never end.

BUT there are three Particulars which will help to constitute our Future Happiness, that are more especially proper to our Contemplation on the Lord's Day.

I. IT is in Scripture insisted upon as a principal Ingredient of the Happiness of the next World; That whereas Death had made a Separation of Soul and Body, and the latter lay under the Power of the Grave, and was the Spoil and Triumph of the Prince of Darkness; now by the wonderful Power of God this is raised up again, and united to the Soul its old Intimate, that so the whole Man may be happy. And these Bodies will then be made (as the Apostle

Apostle calls them, *Spiritual Bodies*; that is, raised and sublimed from that drossy Feculency, freed from Sickness, Pain, Weariness, Hunger, Heaviness, and all the other Imperfections of gross Matter, and so be fit to correspond with the Vigor of the Soul, and the Glories of that Blessed State.

AND this we shou'd especially contemplate on the Lord's-Day, which was instituted on purpose to Commemorate his Triumphant Resurrection, by which he assur'd to us Ours. He Arose for us, and by the same Power will cause us to Rise. The Grave that cou'd not keep Christ, cannot keep us: For if *we believe that Jesus died, and rose again; them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* Can the Head live, and the Body or Members remain dead? Those are Words full of Life and Joy to all Christians, *Because I live, ye shall live also.* As sure as Christ lives, we shall live; and as sure as he is risen, we shall rise. Death shall not dissolve the Union betwixt him and us; nor turn away his Affections from us; but in the Morning of the Resurrection He will send his *Angels*, yea come Himself, and roll away the Stone, and unseal our Graves, and reach his Hand, and deliver us Alive to our Father, and his Father, to our God and his God.

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1 Thess. 4: 14.

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OUR

1 Thess. 4.
14.

OUR Resurrection is the Fruit of Christ's Death, and is confirm'd to us by his Resurrection; who Arose as the Common Head and Representative of all Believers; And this Fruit they shall certainly partake of, and enjoy. The Promise is sure: *All that are in the Graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth.* And this is the Father's Will, who hath sent Christ, *that of all which he hath given him, he shou'd lose nothing, but shou'd raise it up at the last day.*

Joh. 5. 28. *And that every one that believes on the Son, may have everlasting life, and he will raise him up at the last day.*

Joh. 6. 39. *The Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall arise incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* For this corruptible, must put on incorruptible; and this mortal, immortality. Then is death swallow'd up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! Our dead Bodies are no more comely, nor yield a sweeter Savour than the Beasts. But we have a sure Ground of Hope. And besides this Life, we have a Life that is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. Let us Triumph then in these Promises; we shall shortly Triumph

Coloff. 3. 3, 4.

umph in their Performance. For *this is the day which the Lord will make, we shall be glad, and rejoice therein.*

2. IT is a considerable Part of the Happiness of Heaven, that we shall there enjoy the Society of the Blessed Jesus; that we shall see him as he is, behold his Glory, and be with him for ever. What a reviving Sight will it be, how full of Delight and Ravishment to behold Christ, as MAN, Glorified with his Father's Glory, shining like the Sun in its Meridian Lustre? With what astonishing Apprehensions will Redeemed Saints everlastingly behold their Blessed Redeemer?

SOME have been so vain and bold as to enquire whether the Glorified Body of Christ do yet retain either the Wounds, or Scars he received here on Earth. But this is most certain, that the Memory of these will be as fresh, and the Impressions of Love as deep, and its Workings as strong, as if his Wounds were still in our Eyes, and his Complaints still in our Ears, and his Blood still streaming afresh. It will make Heaven more Heaven to us to find him Reigning there, who hath suffered so much for us; and for whom, if we e'er come thither, we shall have so much suffered. It will be the singular Praise of our

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Inheritance, that it was bought with the Price of his Blood; and the singular Joy of the Saints to behold the Purchaser and Price, together with the Possession. When we are rejoycing in Glory, how shall we think of the Blood that revived our Souls? And how shall we look upon him whose Sufferings put that Joy into our Hearts?

WHAT a Ravishment was it to the Disciples, and what an Extacy did it put them into, when our Lord appear'd again to them after his Resurrection? But when at the last Day, after many hundred Years Interruption of his bodily Presence; nay, when those good Men that *have not seen, but have believed*, that have lived to him, denied themselves, been persecuted, have died for him, shall see him in Glory, shall behold that Image of perfect Goodness and Loveliness, shall enjoy him that died for them; that purchased them by his Blood; that renew'd them by his Grace; that open'd Heaven to them; shall hear him say, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, receive a Kingdom prepared for you*: It is in vain to go about to express the Transcendency of this Joy, which no Tongue can utter, nor any Pen describe. We can think a great deal more than we can speak, but we shall then feel what we cannot now conceive;

When

When every Face shall shine forth with Chearfulness, every Eye sparkle with Joy, every Heart overflow with Gladness, and every Mouth be filled with *Hallelujahs*; and the whole Choir sing together *the new Song, the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.* Again,

3. 'TIS another Part of our Future Happiness, that we shall rejoice in the happy Society of one another. We have already some kind of Communion with the Triumphant Saints, *the Spirits of just Men made perfect.* They are still Fellow-Members with us, of the same Body; and tho' in a much greater Measure, and higher Degree, still Communicate with us in the same Graces, and Hope, and Duties, and Privileges; they bear a great Good-will towards us, and we retain their Memory in honour, in a due and proper Manner: So that Death does not dissolve the Communion of Saints with one another, which is founded on the Church; and tho' it be part on Earth, and part in Heaven, is yet but one and the same Society; train'd up in the same School, and in due Time to be altogether advanc'd to dwell together in the same State of Dignity and Happiness. And for this Reason the Apostle thus extols the Privilege of those who are call'd to the Faith

Heb. 12.
23.

Faith of Christ—— *Ye are come* (says he) *unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the Living God, the New Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels, to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant.* We are come thither *already* in respect of Title, of Earnest, and First-fruits, and Spiritual and Internal Communion; but in Heaven we shall come into the full Possession.

Luk. 15. 7.

WE shall there meet the Glorious Assembly and Church of the First-born, a Collection of all the Good Men that ever were from the Foundation of the World; and shall not only renew all our former Acquaintances and old Friendships, but contract new ones: There probably we shall see and *know* all our Kindred, Friends, and Relations, who living in God's Fear, died in his Favour, and *through Faith and Patience have inherited the Promises.* Nor is this only probable, but 'tis not improbable that those Friends that know us in Heaven shall welcome us thither. For since Christ assures us that the very *Angels* (tho' they be so far from being related to our Persons, that they are Foreigners to our very

very Nature,) receive Accession of Joy for a relenting Sinner, that by Repentance begins to turn towards God; we cannot think it absurd, that in a Place where Charity shall not only continue (as St. Paul 1 Cor. 13:8 speaks) but grow perfect, our dear Friends shou'd rejoice not only to see us begin to turn towards God, but come home to him.

NOR is it unlikely that our transported Souls shall mutually Congratulate each other, their having now fully escaped the numerous Rocks and Shelves, and Quick-sands, and threatening Storms, and no less dangerous Calms, through which they are at length arriv'd at that peaceful Haven; where Innocence and Delight (which are here so seldom match'd) are inseparable Companions, both of each other, and each blessed Resident.

AND is not this now a considerable Part of the Happiness of Heaven, that there we shall meet the best of our Relations and Friends, never more to lose them, nor sorrow *with*, or *for* them: Congratulating each others Escape and Arrival: Enlarging our Acquaintance with all the Brave and Generous: Meeting with all the Endearments of Society: A Love that will endear all we meet with to us, and effectually

ally recommend us to them: Open-heartedness and Integrity, that will offer us Security in one another's Bosoms, without design or suspicion: Calmness of Temper and Concord, that will unite in Mind and Hearts: Condescension, that will oblige and familiarize with Freedom and Alacrity.

IF it be justly thought such a Happiness to live with Good Men in their State of Imperfection, when they have so many Faults and Miscalriages to imbitter, as well as Virtues to sweeten their Society; when they know but in part, and so can instruct, and assist us but in part; What will it be to live with them in their State of Glory and Perfection? Where they are free from the least Allay of Impurity, and irregular Passions; and where the Immense Volumes of the Divine Wisdom are laid open, and by one Glance of an Eye they discover more perfectly the Causes, Effects, and Con-
catenation of Things in Heaven and Earth, than the most diligent Enquirers can do here in a thousand Years Study, tho' they had the Sagacity of Solomon. But,

4. IT will be proper to employ our Meditations upon the *Lord's Day*, on the various Mercies and Providences which have been vouchsaf'd to us in the whole Course
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of our own Lives. And here, tho' I am somewhat *shorter* than on the other Heads, the Devout Reader will allow this as full a Consideration; and must do so, if he'll do Justice to the Subject. This indeed is a large and copious Field for Meditation; every *Day*, every *Moment* of our Lives we see and taste that the Lord is Gracious. We need only consult the History of our Lives, to call to mind our own Experience and Observation, to bring to our Remembrance the various Mercies of God; all the Good we have received, or do enjoy, or expect from the Divine Goodness, and those tender Mercies which endure for ever. But the several Instances of these must be left to our private Meditations; and we cannot better employ a part of this Day of Blessings, than in a grateful Reflection upon them.

5. WE must never fail to allow some Portion of this Day (for which the Evening seems most proper) for Meditation upon what we *Read*, or *Hear*. Without this we are not like to be much the better for any thing we either Read our selves, or are Taught by the Publick Ministers of Religion. It is the considering and applying it to our own particular Case that must make it useful to us. Good Desires are

often raised in People's Minds by Hearing God's Word, but they do not produce the Fruit of Virtue in their Conversation; because they imagine that when they have been *affected* with a Sermon, the great End is satisfy'd; when alas! the main Matter, which is the putting of useful Instructions into Practice, is still behind. God indeed has done his Part when he enlightens our Minds, but then 'tis our Business to *walk as Children of Light*. Others defeat the Efficacy of Sermons, by suffering the Pleasures and Cares of this World to destroy the good Seed that is sown in their Hearts; they apply their Minds so immediately to other Objects, that even the *Memory* of those good Impressions is erased; and by neglecting to *Meditate* upon those Things which they Hear, *they make them of none Effect*.

INDEED, to Hear the Word of God only, without Meditation, is but to swallow our Meat without chewing or digesting it. It is Meditation that makes it fit for, and turns it into Nourishment. This sucks the Juice and Sweetness of it out, concorporates it into us, and turns it into Life and Substance; by this the Soul digests and draws forth its Strength and Virtue for its Nourishment and Refreshing. As a Man is but half

half an Hour in taking into his Stomach that Meat which he must have seven or eight Hours to digest ; so he may take into his Understanding and Memory more Truth in one Hour than he is able to digest in many. A Man may Eat too much, but he cannot Digest too well. As Digestion is the turning of the Raw Food into Chyle and Blood, and Spirits, and Flesh ; so Meditation, rightly manag'd, turns the Truths we hear and remember, into warm Affections, fix'd Resolutions, and holy and upright Conversation.

WE may therefore easily judge what good Men are like to get by Sermons, who are unacquainted with, and unaccustom'd to Meditation. This is one Reason why so much excellent Preaching is lost among us, and People run from Sermon to Sermon, and are never weary of Hearing, and yet have such starv'd and languishing Souls.

IT will therefore, as I said, be a proper Employment for part of the Lord's-Day Evening, to sit down and reflect on the *Sermons* we have heard ; and to Meditate on the *wond'rous Things of God's Law*. In the Management of which Duty, it is a good Way to consider the chief Heads of the Discourse, and recollect what we can

under each of them, with the several Proofs from the Holy Scriptures. And then we shou'd press upon our Consciences, every Part in which we find ourselves concerned. And it will be of good use to *write* down the Heads of the Sermons, and those Passages in them, which do most concern, or affect us in the Hearing: which a wise and prudent Master of a Family may improve to very excellent Purpose, by repeating to his Domesticks.

THIS is the way to make us excellent and *judicious Hearers*, as well as *serious Christians*. And our serious Meditation upon, and careful Registring (join'd with a conscientious *Practice*) of what we Hear, will reward the Pious Discourses which our Ministers deliver, and gather them from the Ground, where commonly such Homilies are spilt or scatter'd in Neglect, or Inconsideration.

III. ANOTHER Duty in which we shou'd employ our selves on the Lord's-Day, in the Intervals of Publick Worship, is that Angelical Work of Praise. For this Day being a Festival unto God, a Day of Spiritual Joy and Gladness, how can we better testify our Joy than by our Melody? *Is any Man merry, saith St. James, let him sing*

sing Psalms? The Holy Angels, and the Spirits of Just Men in Heaven, are said to sing Eternal *Hallelujahs* to the Great King.

*All that we know o' th' Saints above,
Is, that they Sing, and that they Love.*

AND if our Sabbath be Typical of Heaven, and the Work of the Sabbath represents to us the Everlasting Work of these Blessed Spirits, How can it be better done than when we are singing the Praises of Him that sits upon the Throne, and of the Lamb our Redeemer? This is to join with the Heavenly Choir in their Heavenly Work; and to observe a Sabbath here, as like that Eternal Sabbath there, as the Imperfection of Earth can resemble the Glory and Happiness of Heaven. And what can be more proper than a Heavenly Frame of Spirit on the Lord's-Day, the Type of the Heavenly State?

THIS (as I said) is the Work of those Saints and Angels, and will be our *own* Everlasting Work; if we were more taken up in this Employment *now*, we shou'd be liker to what we shall be *then*. There the Saints *Rest from their Labours*, they keep an Everlasting Sabbath, and yet are for ever employ'd in the Work of Thanksgiv-

ving and Praise. As their Eyes and Hearts are fill'd with the Knowledge, Glory, and Love of God and our Redemer, so are their Mouths with Everlasting Praises.

LET us go on therefore while we are on Earth, especially on the Lord's-Day, in this Divine Duty. Let us *Pray*, but still Praise; *Hear* and *Read*, but still Praise; Praise him in the Presence of his People; in our *Families*, and in our *Closets*; for it will be our Work to Eternity. It is a sign Men are unfit for Heaven when they are backward to that which is the proper Work and Employment of the Blessed Spirits above. As we hope therefore to come thither, let us begin this Work here, and inure ourselves to that which will be the great Business, and Happiness of Heaven.

WE cannot seriously Meditate upon the Goodness, Wisdom and Power of God manifested in our Creation, and Redemption; we cannot look *back* on a Life of Mercies, and *forward* to an Eternity of Happiness provided for us, without breaking forth into devout Praises and Hallelujahs, without celebrating his Glorious Perfections and Transcendent Goodness, by Thankful Acknowledgments, on this Day, Instituted for a Memorial of these inestimable Benefits.

IN this manner did the Primitive Christians celebrate the Lord's-Day. They look'd upon it as a Time to be observ'd with great Expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christ's Resurrection; and accordingly restrain'd whatever might favour of Sorrow and Sadness: Fasting on this Day they prohibited with the greatest Severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as *Tertullian* informs us; and they never Fasted on those Days, no, not in the Time of *Lent* itself, which they very frequently did on the other Days, during that Season. Nay, the *Montanists*, tho' otherwise great Pretenders to Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it on the *Lord's-Day*. In short, the Christians of those Times accounted it a Joyful and Good Day, and observ'd it as such, by all the Expressions of Rejoicing, and Festivity.

On Sundays (says *Tertullian*) we give our selves to Joy. And they express'd their Joy and Praises more especially in Singing Psalms and Spiritual Songs, which they found to be of excellent Use to elevate their Minds in Heavenly Raptures, and to sublimiate their Pious Souls into higher degrees of God's Love and Bounty. And for this reason Christians are describ'd by *Clement's Alexandrinus* to be continually Blessing

sing and Praising the Divine Being, and Singing of Hymns and Psalms to the Lord of all. And *Pliny* (giving an Account of their Lord's-Days Worship) tells us that they arose early in the Morning upon a Set Day, to sing Hymns to Christ as God.

THE Ancient Writers indeed are found frequently and severely condemning the *Bacchanalian* Singing and Roaring used by the Heathens; but they are no less frequent in commending the Christian Practice of Blessing and Praising God by *Thanksgivings, and Singing of Psalms*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* again expresses it; yea, this was made the Characteristick Description of a good Christian, and was part not only of their Lord's-Days Solemnities, but of their daily Practice, and recurr'd as often as their Meals; as the foremention'd Author further informs us; "A good Christian's Life (says he) is a continual Festival, his Sacrifices are Prayers and Praises, Reading of the Scriptures, and *Singing of Psalms and Hymns* at his Table.

BUT besides this, we have the Example of the Saints in the *Old Testament*, and of our Saviour, and his Apostles, in the *New*, who all practis'd this Duty; and moreover, express Precepts requiring the Performance of it; such as, *Is any merry? let him sing Psalms.*

Psalms. Speaking to your selves in Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, making Melody in your Hearts to the Lord — Admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, singing with Grace in your Hearts to the Lord.

AND perhaps it may be of some weight with those who profess themselves Members of the Church of England, to inform them that *Singing of Psalms* was (in Good King Edward's Days) much used both in Houses as well as Churches, by all that Loved the Reformation, as a most excellent Person tells us*. Which I mention, because I have heard some Talk as if Singing of Psalms in Families had a Dissenting Relish, or Phanatical Aspect. It seems it was quite otherwise in the Old Church of England; Singing of Psalms was as much a Characteristick then of a Church-man, as it us'd to be before of a Primitive Christian.

* Bp. Burnet.

LET these Considerations then engage us all to employ our selves in this Divine and Heavenly Work; but especially Healthful Youth, who have great Advantages, and great Obligations to this sweetest and noblest Work of Man. With what Vivacity and Alacrity may they sing forth God's Praises, whose Bodies are strong, their Spirits

rits lively, their Hearts chearful, and their Voices at command? How much better are these laid out this way, than in Singing the vain Rhapsodies of wanton Poets, the idle Rambles of Lascivious Men?

IV. AND lastly, Another Duty peculiarly proper on the Lord's-Day is that of *Charity* to the *Souls* and *Bodies* of Men. In the Intervals of Devotion therefore, it well becomes us to Relieve the Necessities of the Poor, to Visit the Sick, and Comfort the Sorrowful and Afflicted; to take all Occasions of doing Good to the Souls of Men, by giving seasonable Hints for the Advancement of Piety and Virtue; and a just Discountenance to all Impiety and Prophaneness.

BUT I shall not enlarge upon this Head; only let me observe, that it is made a Motive to the *Jews* to shew Mercy on the Sabbath, that upon it God delivered them out of *Egypt*, as we may see *Deut.* 5. 14, 15. Now our Lord's - Day was Instituted for a Memorial of the greatest Mercy and Loving-kindness of God, of greater far than the Deliverance out of *Egypt*; and we shall be very unmeet to partake of the Mercies of that Blessed Day, if we be not ready as occasion may require, to imitate them in some

some measure, and *be Merciful as our Heavenly Father is Merciful.*

BUT here it may be fit to interpose a Caution, that our Charity on the *Lord's-Day* shou'd not, without great and apparent Necessity, be too laborious and expensive of our Time. It shou'd not be too expensive of our Time, because (as has been shewn at large) there are many other Duties which require a share of it: Nor too laborious, because the Day is design'd, in part, for the Ease of Man and Beast. I except Cases of great Necessity, because great Necessities of this Nature, have great Reason and great Charity of their Side; and we are told by our Lord Himself, that *He will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice; i. e.* in case of Competition, which admits not of both.

AND thus I have finish'd what I intended in this Chapter, which was to give a brief Account of the Duties more especially proper and seasonable on the *Lord's-Day*, wherein Christians may employ themselves in such Times as are *vacant* from Publick Worship.



C H A P. VII.

Concerning the Prophanation of the
Lord's - Day.

THE Design in this Chapter is to represent, in a very brief Manner, the several Ways by which the Lord's Day may be prophaned and polluted, and to shew the Sin and Danger of so doing.

NOW I lay this down as a most certain Truth, that it is a Prophanation of the Lord's-Day to do any of those Civil Works upon it which are not of absolute Necessity, or of very great Convenience, which may be done before, or after it; Or which are an hindrance to, and inconsistent with the Holy Duties, wherein the Sanctification of it does chiefly consist.

F O R since the Christian Sabbath, the First Day of the Week, succeeds the Jewish Seventh Day; and that Morality which was by Almighty God, under the Old Covenant, confined to the latter, is by Christ
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and his Apostles, to us Christians, transferr'd to the *former*: Therefore that which wou'd have been Morally a Violation of the Fourth Commandment under the *Jewish* Sabbath, is a Violation of the Morality of the same Fourth Commandment, if done upon the Lord's-Day; tho' the *strictness* and *severity* enjoyn'd to the *Jews*, be not requir'd of us *Christians*.

It does not therefore become *us* to trouble our selves or others with little Niceties, and unreasonable Scrupulosities in this Matter; such as, instead of advancing the Interest of Religion, do not a little dis-serve and prejudice it; whilst they not only make those who are possess'd with them, Proud, Censorious, and more idly busy than the Things scrupled would have done, but give occasion to Men of looser Morals to speak Evil of our most reasonable and best temper'd Religion, as if it had not a due Regard to Human Infirmities, Wants and Conveniencies, or even to those very Ends of Piety and Devotion, which we affirm, and affirm truly, to be intended and promoted by it.

SUCH is the State and Condition of Man in this World, that there are many little Works, and Offices of Civil Life required to a Comfortable Subsistence, to a ready,

ready, chearful Performance of Religious Duties, and to an innocent Compliance with the Rules of Decency, Civility, or Humility: And as far as any of these, or any such as these, are subservient to, or consistent with the due Sanctification of our Lord's-Day; so far we may be sure, they are consistent with our Duty, and allow'd, or at least not forbidden by our Holy Religion.

THAT nothing is requir'd of us Christians but the Observation of this Day in a Rational, (rather than a Ceremonious Manner) we are instructed both by our Saviour's *Doctrine*, and *Example*. He tells us, *Mar. 2. 27. that the Sabbath was made for Man, and Luk. 6. 9. not Man for the Sabbath:* And, *that it is Lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day.* The Jews, to whom the Fourth Commandment was frequently repeated in terms that imported much Strictness, and a great Severity on those that transgress'd it, came to raise the Observation of it to a Superstitious Niceness. They came, as all Hypocrites are apt to do, to place all Religion in those outward Performances that had an Appearance of great Exactness in Obeying the Law punctually: And therefore they took occasion from the Miracles that our Saviour wrought on the Sabbath-day, and from his Disciples

Mar. 12. 2

Joh. 5. 16

Disciples plucking some Ears of Corn when they were hungry, to represent him as one that prophaned the Sabbath. But since the End of the Sabbath is to keep alive in the Hearts of Men a deep Sense of our Duty to God, and of all the Obligations that Religion puts us under, and not to load us with superstitious Observances, or Scrupulosity in smaller Matters; it appears from thence, that only such an Observation of the Lord's-Day is required, as tends to perfect and advance us in the Service of God.

WE ought indeed to make the *Sabbath our Delight*, to rejoyce on that Day, to put from us the common Concerns of Life, *Not speaking our own Words, nor doing our own Ways*; that is, not letting our Hearts run out into Projects and Cares relating to our own Affairs, or wasting our Time in unnecessary Discourses concerning them: But in all this we are not to Burthen our Minds with a Load which we are not able to bear; but to rejoyce in the Liberty to which Christ hath called us, who hath delivered us from this Part of the *Jewish* Bondage, and hath told us *that the Sabbath was made for Man*; and therefore a nice and scrupulous Anxiety in small Matters, favours more of the *Jewish* Spirit, than the Christian Temper.

Isa. 58: 13.

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BUT

BUT as we ought to beware of this Excess, so we are much more in Danger of the other, of *Prophaning* this Day, either by looking after our Concerns in this World, or employing that Time in which we rest from our Labours, in the Service of our Lusts and Pleasures, and neglecting the Holy Duties by which the Day is in a more especial manner to be sanctify'd to our Lord. It is the Height of Prophaneness to reckon that we are on this Day absolv'd from our Labours, that we may serve our Lusts and Pleasures with the greater Freedom, and less Interruption. If ceasing from the Works of our Calling is made an Occasion of Intemperance and Disorder, to Sloth and Idleness, and to Vice and Debauchery; this is plainly to turn the *Grace of God into Lasciviousness*. God did in the Old Testament reckon it among those Blessings that he had heap'd on his People, *that he gave them his Sabbaths to be a sign between him and them, that they might know that he was the Lord that sanctify'd them*. This being, if well improv'd, so excellent a Means for carrying on all the Designs of Religion: But if instead of being the better for such Blessings, we become the worse for them; and instead of Sanctifying the Lord's-Day beyond the other Days of the Week,

Ezek. 20.
12.

Week, we prophane it more than any of them; this is a *walking contrary to God*, (as the Scripture speaks) and, as it were, to do a Despite to his Laws and Commandments. But I shall not rest in these general Hints; but more particularly point out some of those Practices that are evidently inconsistent with a holy Regard to the Lord's Day. And in doing this, I shall need only describe the Behaviour of too many among us upon it; the Prophanation of the Lord's Day being one of the Crying Sins of our Nation; which makes a loud Clamour for Divine Vengeance in the *Ears of the Lord of Sabbath*. For,

I. THERE are many who pay no manner of Regard to this Day; they are arrived to such a Pitch of Impiety, as to make no difference at all between this and other Days, unless they distinguish it by mere flaming Instances of Wickedness and Debauchery, committed upon it. They not only neglect God's Publick Worship and Service, but spend the Day in Excess and Intemperance, in lewd and sinful Practices, which are unlawful at any Time, but upon this Day are a double Breach and Violation of God's Law. It has been a common Observation (the more is our Shame, and the

greater our Sin and Danger) that there have been more Young People debauch'd on the Lord's-Day than all the Week after.

2. MANY others there are who spend this Day of *Spiritual* Work and Labour, in twi-
nish Sloth and Idleness; who seem to think that a bare Rest from Labour is all that is requir'd on the Lord's-Day. But sure there cannot be a greater Mistake than this: For our Rest from Secular Employments is not on a Ceremonial Account only, but in order to our more free and uninterrupted Attendance upon God in Holy Duties. This is like the Heavenly Sabbath, where the Saints *Rest from their Labours*, and yet *Rest not Day and Night from crying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. In like manner, that Time which we save from the Works of our Calling, we are to lay out in the Duties of Religion: For the Day was not ordained to give us a Pretence for Idleness, but only to change our Employment from Earthly to Heavenly. And therefore they who keep the Lord's-Day only by resting from their Labours, the very *brute Beasts* keep it as well as they.

3. THERE are too many others who are busy enough upon this Day, tho' their Employment be not of the right Sort, but such

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as God will neither Bless nor Reward ; such I mean as exercise their ordinary Callings and Employments ; which tho' Lawful, and a Duty upon other Days, is expressly forbidden on this ; *Thou shalt do no manner of work*, says the Fourth Commandment most expressly. In Obedience to which, the Christian Emperors, *Constantine* and *Theodosius*, did both prohibit the Prophanation of this Day by the Works of Men's ordinary Callings, even by those of their Subjects who were Strangers and Enemies to Christianity. And our *own* Laws do strictly prohibit this Practice ; And it well becomes all the Votaries of Religion to endeavour the retrieving the Honour of this Day, by putting them vigorously in execution, which to the great Dishonour of God, and the Scandal of our Nation, is too much neglected.

OUR Ancestors, the Converted Saxons, did so ; they dedicated this Day entirely to Religious Offices ; yea, they began the Observation of it on *Saturday* by Three a Clock in the Afternoon, and kept it till Break of Day on *Monday* ; all which Time they were by Law obliged to abstain from Buying and Selling, and Hunting, and all manner of worldly Work and Business whatsoever ; and if any presum'd to do otherwise,

therwise, they were either Fined, or corporally Punish'd.

4. THERE are many more who spend a great Part of this Holy Day in vain Sports and Pastimes, in impertinent Visits (and the usual Concomitants of them) Idle, and Unprofitable (if not loose and prophane) Discourse; in Reading and Telling News; in vain or wicked Company and Conversation; in Publick Walks, and Places of Resort and Entertainment. I do not say that every Thing of this kind is, in itself, a Propagation of this Day. Conversation and Society, as they may be manag'd, may be made highly serviceable to the Purposes of Piety, and consequently some of the best Means of Sanctifying it; and a Walk in the Fields may be made, at the same time, a Walk towards Heaven: Nor am I contending for a *Judaical* Strictness and Rigour, such as is inconsistent with our present State and Condition, and no where required by the Laws of Christianity.

BUT the Things I have mention'd, as they are commonly manag'd, are fit for nothing but to dissolve the Minds of Men into Mirth and Pleasure, to make 'em Light and Vain, and to carry 'em off from all serious Thoughts of God and Religion, and the Meditations of another World; and to
give

give the Devil an Advantage which he never fails to take, to steal the good Seed, the Word of God, which they have heard this Day out of their Hearts, and to make it of none Effect. Whatever some have pretended in Excuse for Sports and Recreations on this Day, it is certain they are no more suitable to the Sanctity of the Day, than they are to that devout and heavenly Frame of Spirit, which is required to the due Sanctification of it. Such Diversions, how innocent or convenient soever in other respects, are Letts or Impediments to the Religious Duties of the Day; both by robbing us of our *Time*, that Sacred Time which ought to be employ'd in the Performances of them; and by robbing us of our *Hearts*, and indisposing us for such Performance; they are naturally apt to steal away our Affections from Heavenly Things, and indispose the Mind for Spiritual Exercises.

BESIDES, Sports and Pastimes are prohibited by our Laws, and the Publick Authority of the Nation, to which (if there were nothing more) it becomes all Men to pay a due Regard. This is so well known, that I need not produce particular *Statutes*, of which we have many, both of old, as well as of later Times. There was

* Discourse
of the Sab-
bath, p.
132.

an unhappy Time indeed, wherein these Things met with too much Encouragement, from those whose Duty obliged them to fence this Day from such prophane Violations; of which I shall only say, that as that laid the Foundation of much of the present Impiety upon it, there is the more need of making use of that Power which our Governors now afford us, for the rooting it out. I hope the Learned *Le Strange* had reason for what he says concerning this Matter. *If my Opinion* (says he *) *be demanded concerning his Majesty's Book,* (he means the Book of Sports) *I shall say of that only this,* His Princely Intentions were therein (I doubt not) Pious enough; not so, I fear, theirs, who first suggested the Convenience and Fitness of that Liberty unto him. But to return.

THEODOSIUS the Great prohibited all Publick Shews upon the Lord's-Day, that the Worship of God might not be confounded with those prophane Solemnities. This Law the Younger *Theodosius* some few Years after confirmed and enlarged, Enacting, That on the Lord's-Days not only *Christians*, but even *Jews* and *Heathens* shou'd be restrain'd from the Pleasure of all Sights and Spectacles, and the Theatres be shut up in every Place.

BUT

BUT, as a Learned Man observes, these Things are prohibited by a higher Authority, even by that of *God Himself*: For the Day being appointed to be *sanctify'd*, that is, to be an *Holy*, not a Play-day, all Recreations at other Times lawful are interdicted on it, but such whereby the Mind is better disposed towards the Sanctification of the Day, or such as are no Impediments to that Sanctification. For it is a Rule in the Decalogue, and all other Divine Laws, that where any Thing is commanded to be done, all Things subservient to the Performance of it are consequently enjoyn'd, and also all Letts and Hindrances prohibited. Besides, *God's House* hath been ever thought prophaned and polluted by Sports and Meetings of good Fellowship, and why not his *Day*? Nor is it enough that these Recreations be not an hindrance to Publick Exercises in the Church, but they must not disturb or interrupt the Private Duties of the Family, or the Closet. For God commandeth not the Sanctification of some few Hours, but of a *Day*, that is, an *whole* Day, allowing sufficient Time for Repose, and Refreshment of the Body. And so our Church interpreteth the Command: *God's obedient People* (saith the Homily) *should use the Sunday holily, and rest from their common*

common and daily Business, and give themselves wholly to heavenly Exercises.

BUT if I could persuade those who have Time for Pastimes, and Recreations, and find the Lord's Day longer than they know well how to spend, seriously to engage in some of these Heavenly Exercises; for instance, in that transporting Work of contemplating and adoring God's wondrous Works of Creation and Redemption, they wou'd then need no other Recreation; they wou'd think the longest Day short enough, and be sorry that the Night had shorten'd their Pleasure.

5. **THERE** are not a few who now and then talk as if they Prophaned this Day upon Principle; they think it to be only of human Institution, and have no due Sense of the Nature and Necessity of Publick Worship. They acknowledge it is their Duty to worship God, but they think they can do that at Home as well as at Church; that it is not the Place which makes the Prayers more or less acceptable and effectual; but God hears us wherever we Pray, and is always pleas'd with the single and private Devotions of Good Men; and the World is now so well stor'd with good Books, that they can spend their Time in Reading at Home, to as good Purpose as if they

they went to Church to hear a Sermon. And there are too many who act according to these Principles, that is, who seldom or never come to Church, tho' how they spend their Time at Home, I know not; but have great Reason to suspect that with some of 'em a warm Bed in the Morning, and a Bottle of Wine or a Walk in the Fields in the Afternoon serves instead even of their Private Devotions.

AND a great many more there are, who in all their Discourses betray the mean Opinion they have of *Sermons*, and therefore cannot but think *one* on the Lord's-Day is sufficient; and no doubt wou'd be well contented if there were none at all. They pretend indeed to admire the *Prayers*; but that it is no more than *Pretence*, appears from this, That they seldom take any Opportunities of attending them, nor shew any Signs of Reverence and Devotion when they do. Some of this Class, I must confess, make a shift to come to Church in the *Afternoon*, not for Devotion, but in Compliance with the Fashion of the Place where they live; but then they are sure to be at the *Tavern* or *Coffee-house* in the *Evening*, to Rail at the Minister, and Droll upon the Sermon, or at least to Talk about their *Party*, or *Worldly* Concerns.

THIS

THIS Practice of frequenting *Taverns*, and *Ale-houses*, or *Coffee-houses*, is now become so common, that many are apt to think there is no Sin, nor Danger in it: What greater Hurt is there (will they say) in Drinking a Glass of Wine, or a Dish of Coffee on *Sunday*, than on other Days? And a Man that scruples it, is sure to be hiss'd at as a *Fanatick*, or a *Presbyterian*.

BUT do Men indeed think it no Sin to neglect their *Families*, who ought to be instructed in the good *Knowledge of the Lord*, and with whom they ought to offer up their Prayers and Praises to God? Is it no Sin to neglect their *Closet Devotions*, nor to hinder *other Families*, and particular Persons, from the Performance of these Duties? Which they necessarily do, by obliging them to attend upon them. Can they think it no Sin to be accessory to Men's Breaking both the Laws of God, and Man, by Exercising their Ordinary Callings on the Lord's-Day? Are such Places as *Taverns* and *Coffee-houses* fit for Reflection upon what we have heard, and to preserve in us a serious and devout Frame of Spirit? Do we not ought to make this Day as long as we can, and to improve every Minute of this precious Time? These Things duly consider'd, it will appear to be altogether

gether inconsistent with a serious Regard to the Lord's-Day, to spend any Part of it in such Houses. And we may fitly apply the Words of the Prophet *Isaiab*, concerning such as Prophan'd the *Jewish* Festivals, to these Men. *Wo be to them that rise up early in the Morning*, [and the Case is the same if they lie a-bed in the Morning, and when they arise it is] *that they may follow strong Drink, and continue until Night, till Wine inflame them*; But they regard not [the great End of this Blessed Day the Celebrating] *the work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands, [in the Creation and Redemption of the World.]*

BUT I must not leave this till I have observ'd with how little Reason Men are reproach'd with odious Names, for scrupling such Things as I have here, and just before mention'd, *viz.* Sports and Recreations, and haunting Taverns and Ale-houses on the Lord's-Day. 'Tis certain, the *Laws* both Civil and Ecclesiastical do expressly prohibit and condemn these Practices. And shall Men be call'd *Fanaticks*, *Presbyterians*, and *Low-Church-Men*, for Observing the Laws of the Church and State? Where will these Things end? I believe King *Charles* the Second was ne-

ver thought by any to be favourable to the *Presbyterian* Interest, or in the least inclin'd to be over-much Righteous; nor had he any about him, who wou'd advise to the encouraging of too much *Preciseness* in Matters of Religion and Morality. And yet He in his *Injunctions* to the Clergy in 62 requires this, among other Things, " That for the
" better Observing of the Lord's-Day, too
" much neglected of late, they shall, as by
" often and serious Admonitions, and sharp
" Reproofs, endeavour to draw off People
" from such Idle, Debauch'd and Prophane
" Courses as dishonour God, bring a Scandal
" on Religion, and Contempt on the
" Laws and Authority Ecclesiastical and
" Civil; so shall they very earnestly persuade
" them to frequent Divine Service
" on the Lord's-Day: And in case any Person
" shall resort unto any Taverns, or Ale-
" houses, or use any unlawful Sports and
" Exercises on it, the Minister shall Exhort
" those which are in Authority in their several
" Parishes and Congregations carefully
" to look after all such Offenders in any
" kind whatsoever, together with all those
" that Abett, Receive or Entertain them, that
" they may be proceeded against according
" to the Laws, and Quality of their Offences,
" that all such Disorders may for the Time
" to come be prevented."

6. AND

6. AND Lastly, How great is the Number of such as perhaps do attend upon the Publick Worship of God, even both Parts of this Day, and yet cannot be said to sanctify, and keep it Holy? For all is but a formal, customary, out-side Religion, or rather the *shadow* and *appearance* of Religion. They are not deeply affected with a Sense of God, and what they owe to Him; notwithstanding their running a Round of Duties, they have no Principle of *Faith* in *Christ*, nor *Love* to Him. They sadly upon this Day neglect the Duties of the *Family*, and the *Closet*; and the *Intervals* of Publick Worship, tho' they are not fill'd up with Debauchery and Prophaneness, are spent in perfect Trifling and Idleness. These certainly do not Sanctify the Lord's-Day as they ought, who do not employ *half* of it in any Exercises which have so much as *the Form of Godliness*, nor an *Hour* in the real and sincere Acts of Piety and Devotion.

NOR must I omit to add, that to our punctual Performance of the several Duties in *Publick* and *Private*, incumbent upon us on the Lord's-Day, we must be careful that we join a suitable Conversation all the Week after; without which we cannot be said to keep Holy, or Sanctify this Day. We must not think it a sufficient Evidence of the
Since-

Sincerity of our Religion, that as to all the Externals of it, we observe the Lord's-Day solemnly, unless we also take care upon the other Days, to *live godly, righteously and soberly in the World, as becomes the Gospel of Christ*: We must not rest in the Means, without attaining the End; or think it sufficient for our Recommendation to God, or Approbation by Him, that we abstain from our worldly Employments, and from all Sin and Impiety, or even discharge the proper Duties of the Day with great Exactness, both in *Publick and Private*, unless these transforming Religious Exercises have their full and proper Effect, in order to the *renewing of our Natures*, and the *reforming of our Lives*. For the Performance of all the Duties, and the Use of all the Means which I have been recommending, separated from that which is the great End of Religion, the Conformity of our selves to the *Holy Will and Nature of God*, is so far from finding Acceptance with Him, that it is an Abomination to Him.

Glory be to God most High.

DEVOT.

DEVOTIONS

FOR THE

Lord's Day.

A Form of Prayer that may be added to our usual Devotions on *Saturday Night*; preparatory for the *Lord's - Day*.

[From the *Publick Form of Prayers* which are said in the Church of Neufchatel every *Saturday* at Five of the Clock in the Evening.]

Lord God Almighty! I Praise Thee and I Thank Thee with my Heart and Mouth for all the Benefits which thou hast bestow'd upon me, during all the Time of my Life; and particularly during this Week, which is now about to end. I beseech Thee also, that Thou would'st be pleased to forgive me all the Sins which I have committed, and to grant me thy Grace that

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I may

I may employ the approaching Week, and all my Life, to the Glory of Thy Holy Name, to the Edification of my Neighbours, and to the setting forward my own Salvation. And forasmuch as to-Morrow is the Day of Rest, which is consecrated to Thy Holy Service; assist me, O Lord, to the end that I may not forsake the Solemn Assembly of Thy People, but with an ardent Desire, and true Zeal, I may appear in Thy House, to celebrate Publickly, with all the Christian Church, the Worship which I owe to Thee. Prepare my Heart, O God, that it may be a Vessel of Thy Grace, and a Purify'd Temple of Thy Holy Spirit. Grant that on this next Lord's Day I may not only abstain from Worldly Business, that I may Sanctify it by the Exercises of Piety, by ardent Prayers, by Hearing, by Reading, by serious Meditation upon Thy Word, and Works, and by the Works of Christian Charity. Give Thy Grace to the Ministers of Thy Word, that they may acquit themselves in their Charge with Care and Fidelity, and grant a Blessing upon their Labours. Lastly, O Lord, let all my Life be nothing else but a Preparation for that Eternal Rest, which Thou hast promis'd us, and which Thou dost reserve for us in Heaven, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

For

For the Lord's-Day Morning.

To be added to the Devotions, on Ordinary Days.

Most Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
 God Almighty; the Father of
 Mercies, the God of Peace and
 Comfort, by whose Power I and
 all Things were Created, and by whose
 good Providence we are all Preserv'd and
 Maintain'd. Thou art greatly to be fear'd
 in the Assemblies of Thy Saints, and to be
 had in Reverence by all that draw nigh
 unto Thee. All the Blessed Company a-
 bove do with the highest Admiration and
 Love give continual Praise and Thanks,
 and Honour and Worship to Thee; ac-
 knowledging that Thou art above all that
 they are able to speak of Thee, or ascribe
 to Thee. Much more art Thou exalted
 above the Thoughts of such poor Mortals
 as dwell here below, who are cloath'd with
 Flesh, and live far remote from the Throne
 of thy Glory. It is an infinite and ama-
 zing Condescension in Thy Majesty, to suf-
 fer such a despicable Worm, such a guilty
 and polluted Creature as I am, to come be-

fore Thee, to wait upon Thee, to speak unto Thee, to have any Thing to do with Thee, in a way of Grace and Mercy.

HADST Thou dealt with me according to my Deserts, and rewarded me after my Iniquities, I had been long ago in that Place of Torment, where Prayer and the Means of Grace cou'd do me no good at all. Pardon, I humbly pray Thee, all the Sins I have been guilty of against Thy Divine Majesty; all my Abuses of Thy Mercies, mis-spending my Time, prophaning Thy Sabbaths, polluting Thine Ordinances; the unworthy Returns I have made to Thee for all Thy Benefits, which might justly cause Thee to withdraw Thy self from me, and Thy Blessing from Thine Ordinances.

I AM ashamed, O Lord, to think that ever I have disobey'd Thee, to whom I stand so much indebted, both as I am Thy Creature, and as I am redeemed by the precious Blood of Thy Son Jesus. It grieves me that I have transgress'd any of Thy Righteous, and Good Laws, by which it was my Happiness, as well as my Duty, to be govern'd. Grant me the Assistance of Thy Holy Spirit, to enable me for the Time to come, to live godly, righteously, and soberly in this present World; to raise

my Soul to high and admiring Thoughts of this inexpressible and amazing Love of Thine towards Thy unworthy Creatures; that I may not any longer live to my self, but that I may live to Him who died for me. Settle in me an immutable Love to Thee; and the highest Esteem of Thy Favour and Grace, as better than Life in self: That so I may study above all Things, to approve my very Heart, and all my Actions to Thee; and feel the Sense of Thy Acceptance of me, giving me greater Pleasure than all the World can afford.

AND now, O Lord, I desire, from the Ground of my Heart, to Bless and Praise Thee, the great Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all Things, for Thy unspeakable Goodness and Favours to me, and all Mankind. And O that I may be possessed with a mighty reverent Sense of Thee, and of all the Benefits thou hast bestow'd on me; and that my Heart may be lifted up to Heaven, in Love to Thee, and Joy in Thee, whilst I Bless and Praise Thee, and speak Good of Thy Name.

I HERE remember with all Humility and Thankfulness, that Thou art the great Creator of Men and Angels; and acknowledge Thy Care and Providence over Thy ancient People, in Blessing and Sancti-

lying a Day, wherein Thou restedst from Thy Works, that they might cease from all other Employments, and admire Thy wonderful Works, extol Thy Power, bless Thy Goodness, and be astonish'd at Thy Wisdom, in Making, Preserving, Adorning, and Governing this excellent Frame of the World. The Heavens declare Thy Glory, O God, and the Firmament sheweth Thy Handy-work. The Sun, the Moon, and all the Host of Heaven, proclaim the Greatness and Splendor of Thy Majesty. The whole Earth is full of Thy Rich Goodness; so is the great and wide Sea, wherein are Things moving innumerable, both small and great Living Creatures. There is nothing but what speaks of Thee; and above all, the Children of Men, whom Thou hast wonderfully made, and curiously wrought, and impress'd with Thine own Image; that they might understand Thee, and love Thee, in all, and above all Things.

THE Variety, the Order, the Suredfastness of all Thy Works in this great World, abundantly utter Thy adorable Perfections. But Thou, O Lord, by Thy Goodness in giving Thy Son for us, and then raising Him up from the Dead, as upon This Day, and setting Him at Thy Right Hand,

Hand, hast given us new Matter of Wonder, and Praise; and Consecrated a better Rest, and Holy Day of Rejoicing: Wherein we shou'd behold the Glories of another World, and have before our Eyes the Happiness Thou intendest for us there, together with all the excellent Means that lead unto it. I Bless Thee for Thy general Mercies of Creation, Preservation, and Providence; but more especially for Thy astonishing Love manifested to the World, by Thy Son Jesus Christ; for His mysterious Incarnation and Birth; for His holy Doctrine, and exemplary Life; for His bitter and meritorious Death and Passion; for His victorious Resurrection from the Dead, and His Ascension into Heaven; and for His continual Intercession for us at Thy Right Hand; and sending us the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

O GOD, how great was Thy Love to the sinful Sons of Men! Which moved Thee to pass by such innumerable Offences, whereby they had provoked Thy severest Displeasure. How great was that Love! which hath honour'd our Mortal Nature with so high a Glory; and committed the Care of our Souls to one so Mighty to save, and so full of Kindness, and most tender Compassions towards us.

What shall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me, and all Mankind?

HELP me (I humbly pray Thee) to manifest my real and unfeigned Desires to make some becoming Returns to Thee, by my careful Improvement of the holy Opportunity which Thou this Day puttest into my Hands. Blessed be God that I live in a Land of Light and Vision, in all Parts of which God is publicly and solemnly Worshipp'd on this Day; and that this Blessed Privilege is continu'd to us, and we are not wishing, in vain, for these Days of the Son of Man; that our Candlestick is not remov'd out of its Place, as justly it might have been, because we have left our first Love. Let not Thy Sabbaths, and Thine Ordinances be continu'd to me in vain; but help me to grow in Grace under all the Means of Grace I enjoy. The older I grow, and the nearer I come to my End, make me to be the fitter for Thy self. Make me to love the Habitation of Thine House, and the Place where Thine Honour dwelleth; and to esteem one Day in Thy Courts better than a Thousand elsewhere. Let it be my Meat and my Drink, the Joy and Rejoicing of my Soul, to do Thy Will, and to be employ'd in Thy Service.

Go

Go along with me, I humbly pray Thee, into the Assembly of Thy Servants; for if Thy Presence go not up with me, wherefore should I go up? Let there be no Cloud of Guilt to interpose between me, and my God this Day, and to intercept my comfortable Communion with Him. And let my Lusts be mortify'd and subdu'd, that my own Corruptions may not be as a Clog to me, to hinder the Ascent of my Soul towards Heaven. Unite and compose my Thoughts in Thy Presence, and cause me to attend upon Thee without Distraction. Let me consider that Thou hast an Eye upon us at all Times, and more especially when we draw nigh to Thee in the Way of Thy Worship. Help me against my manifold Infirmities, and the Sins that do most easily beset us in our Attendance upon Thee.

BE with me this Day in all I undertake: Let my Confession of Sin increase my Hatred of it, and Watchfulness against it; Let my Praises and Thanksgivings be the inward Sense, and my Prayers the earnest Desires of my Soul. Let Thy Word come with Life and Power, and be as good Seed sown in good Soil, taking Root, and bringing forth Fruit to Thy Praise. Grant that

that my Mind may be more enlightned to understand the Truth as it is in Jesus : that my Will may be more stedfastly resolv'd to cleave to it ; that my Affections may be more excited to a stronger and more ardent Love to Thee, and to a greater Delight in Thee ; and all the Powers of my Soul dispos'd to serve Thee at all other Times more chearfully and readily, in all the Duties of our most Holy Calling.

LET Thy Presence be in all the Assemblies of good Christians this Day : Grace be to all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity ; let great Grace be upon them all. Accompany thine own Institutions with thine own Blessing. Make thy Word in the Mouths of thy Ministers very effectual for turning many to Righteousness. In the Chariot of the Everlasting Gospel let the great Redeemer ride forth Triumphantly, conquering and to conquer ; and let every Thought be brought into Obedience to Him. Let many be brought to Believe the Report of the Gospel, and to many let the Arm of the Lord be Revealed. Let obstinate Sinners be convinced and converted ; such as are Blind and Ignorant, inform'd and instructed ; and thy Saints edified and built up in Faith,

Faith, Holiness, and Comfort unto Salvation. And accept of all the Prayers and Praises of all thy People, met this Day together according to thy Will; and be Thou a little Sanctuary to such as by Persecution, or other unavoidable Necessity, are hindered from attending on thy Publick Worship. Let those that live in such Spiritual Destitutions, receive extraordinary Supplies from Thy self; and the more they want of other Helps, let them find the greater Assistances from Thee.

Now the Lord of Peace Himself give us Peace always by all Means. The God of Hope fill us with Joy and Peace in Believing, for Christ Jesus sake, our Blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who hath taught us to pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.*

For

For the Lord's Day Afternoon:

Before the Evening Service begins.

REAT and Glorious Lord God;
 thy Name is Excellent in all the
 Earth, and Thou art for ever
 Praised by all the Host of Hea-
 ven, who are never weary of thy Service.
 It is our great Happiness and Privilege,
 that we are allow'd to join with those
 Heavenly Inhabitants, in administering, wor-
 shipping, blessing and loving Thee, the
 great Lord of all. Blessed be thy Name,
 that I may spend a Day in thy Courts, and
 am invited to a longer attendance on thy
 Divine Majesty in the Duties of thy Wor-
 ship and Service. Let not any sinful Dul-
 nels or Weariness seize on my Spirit, to
 indispose me for this blessed Employment;
 let it never be irksome to me to renew my
 Thoughts and Acknowledgments of thy
 infinite Goodness. And let my Prayers
 and Praises be always acceptable in thy
 sight,

fight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer.

My great Unfruitfulness, I confess, in the Knowledge of Christ, may justly make thee deny thy gracious Influences from Heaven upon me. But, O God of all Grace, who multipliest Mercy, and delightest in doing Good, pardon me, and make me better, by the Blood of thy Son interceding for me, and the Power of thy Spirit working in me. Quicken my Soul to hear thy Holy Word with greater Fear and Reverence; to sing thy Praises with greater Cheerfulness and Gladness; and to pray to thee with more earnest Affection and Steadiness of Mind; that so this may be a good Day to my Soul, and I may by the Holy Exercises of it, be the better dispos'd and enabled to spend the rest of my days more to thy Glory.

REHOLD, O Lord, I am resolv'd again to address my self unto thee with Praise and Thanksgiving, for granting me such happy Opportunities to look back to Thee the Author of my Being; to lift up my Soul towards our Heavenly Country; and to unite it to the first and chiefest Good; from whence I derive whatever I have or hope for.

WHAT

WHAT is Man that thou art mindful of him? What are the Sons of Men that thou dost at all consider them? Thou hast crown'd us with Glory and Honour here below, and rais'd us to a Dominion over the Works of thy Hands. Thou hast endu'd us with Understandings to know Thee, and with Wills to love Thee; whose most excellent Wisdom, Almighty Power, and surpassing Goodness, we discover in all thy Works of Wonder.

BUT what is *sinful* Man that thou shouldst so much regard him, as to seek and save him when he was lost? To send thy Son into the World to Die for us, and having made a Propitiation for our Sins by his Death, to rise again for our Justification. We have those Reasons to bless Thee which the Angels have not. We must admire Thee not only as the great Creator and Preserver of all things; but also as the Redeemer of Mankind out of a forlorn Condition, by the Manifestation of thy self in our Flesh, by the Blood of thy Son, the constant Breathings of the Holy Spirit, the Light of thy Gospel, and an unwearied Patience which waits on us, and propounds to us no less Happiness than to sit together in Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus, who

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is advanced far above all Principalities and Powers, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come.

I praise Thee, O God; I magnify thy most Holy Name; I confess we are bound to Thee above all other Creatures that we have any Knowledge of; for we are twice thy Creatures, and thou hast a double Title to all we have. O stir up all that is within me to bless Thee, and love Thee, and offer up the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to Thee. Fill my Heart with Joy and Gladness, that I have another Opportunity wherein to recount thy Mercies to me, to be further instructed in thy Mind and Will declared by our Saviour; and to be under the comfortable Influences of Heaven, and to promote my Growth and Increase in all Wisdom, Goodness, and Virtue.

AND grant that thy Holy Word which is to be delivered unto us, may be receiv'd willingly, thankfully, and attentively; with teachable Minds, and honest Hearts; with Hearts that are void of a Prophane or Captious Spirit, void of Sensuality, void of Prejudice and Hypocrisy; that so we may receive with Meekness, the ingrafted Word, which is able to save our Souls.

SUFFER

SUFFER me not to rest in the Means, without attaining the End; or to think it sufficient for my Recommendation to Thee, and Approbation by Thee, that I am allow'd the Liberty and Privilege of speaking unto Thee, and hearing Thee speak unto me; but let these transforming religious Exercises have their full and proper Effect, in order to the renewing of my Nature, and the reforming of my Life. O that my Thankfulness and good Affections, and zealous Desires, may not End with my Prayers, nor conclude with this Day: But I may be possess'd with such a strong and habitual Sense of Thee, and of my Obligations to Thee, that I may every Day earnestly and heartily serve Thee in all the Actions of Christian Piety, and be unwearied in well-doing unto the Conclusion of my Life. Grant this, O Heavenly Father, with all other things which thou judgest necessary for me, or for thy whole Church; whose Services this Day, I humbly beseech Thee may be acceptable to Thee, thro' the Merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Saviour. To whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be rendred, as is most due, all Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise, with
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the most Affectionate and Faithful Obedience, by all Angels, all Men, all Creatures, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*



For the Lord's-Day Evening.

Lord most high, the Holy One, who inhabitest Eternity, who only hast Immortality, and art most Blessed in thy own Incomprehensible Perfections! Thou art to be feared and loved, to be worshipped and praised by me, and all reasonable Creatures; who have any Knowledge how Great, how Mighty, how Wise and Merciful Thou art. All thy Works Praise Thee, O Lord, and we more especially ought to bless Thee, whom thou hast made to understand thy most adorable Excellencies, which are far beyond the highest of all our Thoughts or Conceptions; above the Apprehensions of the best of thy Creatures. Thy Glorious Name is exalted above all Blessing and Praise.

Thou renewest thy Favours continually, and art still pouring upon me innumerable

merable Benefits; of which this is not the least, that thou givest me leave to come in to thy Presence, to call Thee Father, and to make known my requests to Thee by Prayer, and Supplication, with Thanksgiving. I accept, O Lord, with all Thankfulness, this thy great Grace and Loving-Kindness: And am here again prostrate before Thee this Evening, to acknowledge thy Goodness in making me one of those Creatures, who are capable of knowing Thee, acknowledging Thee, and loving Thee; and by being made like Thee, eternally happy with Thee.

I Admire and Praise Thee for thy Goodness to all thy Creatures, who live daily upon thy bounteous Allowance. The Eyes of all wait on Thee, and thou givest them their Food in due Season. Thou diffusest thy Blessings in several Streams, to every one of them according to their needs: That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thy Hand, they are filled with Good. I give Thee the Glory of thy plentiful Provision thou hast made for them, and more particularly Admire thy great Liberality to the Children of Men; under whose Feet thou hast put in Subjection all Sheep and Oxen, yea
and

and the Beasts of the Field, the Fowl of the Air, and the Fish of the Sea, and whatsoever passeth thro' the Paths of the Waters. O Lord I Praise Thee for thy Goodness to those who Praise Thee not themselves. Be thou Adored and Acknowledg'd in thy Bounty, which bestows so many Blessings unask'd, and unsought, and continues them, notwithstanding abundance of Provocations, and most high Offences that they have given to thy Merciful Kindness.

BUT above all, I acknowledge thy inestimable Benefits bestow'd upon Mankind in Christ Jesus the Son of thy Love, whom thou wast well pleas'd in thine infinite Mercy to send among us in our own Likeness; to assure us of thy Goodwill towards us, and to instruct us in our Duty towards thee; and to give us hope of no less than immortal Life, by patient continuance in well-doing.

I remember, with all Thankfulness, his miraculous Birth, at which the Angels rejoic'd; his most Holy Life; his bitter Agony and bloody Death; his Glorious Resurrection upon this Day from the Grave; his Ascension into the Heavens to sit at the Right Hand of the Majesty on

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High;

High ; his Triumph over all the Powers of Darknes ; and his Sovereign Dominion over all Angels, Authorities and Powers, whom thou hast made Subject to him.

I Rejoice in the Light of thy Holy Gospel, that I see the way to be happy both by the Doctrine, and by the Example of thy Son Jesus ; that we have the Encouragement of his precious Promises, and such good hope of the Remission of Sin, and of Eternal Life, in the Day when he shall judge the World in Righteousness.

AND let thy Goodness to thy Church be never forgotten by me, which thou hast in all Ages protected and defended ; in a marvellous manner propagating the Gospel of our Saviour, confounding its Opposers, and spreading it by the Power of the Holy Ghost, over the Face of the whole Earth.

I thank thee for thy singular Favour to these Countries wherein I live : To whom these glad Tidings of Salvation have reach'd ; and who have long enjoy'd a more glorious Light than many other Places ; and being deliver'd from the darkness of Popish Superstition, and from sundry

dry Attempts that have been made to bereave us of this Happiness; and are again settled, after many Confusions, in a peaceable Enjoyment of thy true Religion; which thou hast also continu'd to us, though we have not brought forth Fruit worthy of the Gospel of thy Grace.

I render Thanks to Thee, most Gracious God, for innumerable Favours conferr'd upon me thy most unworthy Servant; for my Being, for my Reason, and for all other Endowments and Faculties of my Soul and Body; for thy continual Care and watchful Providence over Me and Mine from the beginning, and throughout the whole Course of my Life to this moment; for thy merciful Preservation of me from those Dangers to which I have been expos'd at any time. Blessed be God that I am now alive, and that I have liv'd so long in Health and Strength, and enjoy'd a competent Provision of all good Things; whereas my Eyes might have been consum'd with Grief, my Bones sore vexed, and I might have mingled my Drink with continual weeping.

I praise thee for any good Inclinations I find in my Will; for any devout Affections which are stirring in my Heart; for

all the Advantages I have had by my Education, good Company, and Holy Examples; and more especially for the Illuminations of the Holy Spirit by the Blessed Gospel; the Breathings of it frequently into my Spirit; the Importunities thou hast us'd to draw me to thee; and thy unwearied Patience with me, after so many and great Provocations.

I thank Thee that thou hast permitted me this Day to attend upon Thee, together with my Christian Brethren, in the Publick Duties of thy Worship and Service; that I live in a Place where thy Gospel is Preach'd, and the way to Heaven so clearly reveal'd; where I have so many Opportunities of hearing from Thee, and waiting upon Thee; that this Day I have enjoy'd the Means of being happy for ever; and have begun in any measure that Eternal Rest which thy faithful Servants wait for; when we shall Praise, and Thank, and Love Thee our Heavenly Father, better than we can do now, whilst we are in these frail Bodies, and absent from the Lord.

O that all thy undeserved Goodness may have this Effect upon me; to make me heartily love Thee, and devoutly worship

ship Thee, and zealously obey Thee, and stedfastly trust and hope in Thee for ever. That by a careful Improvement of the Knowledge of Thee our God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom Thou hast given me all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness; I may still enjoy these inestimable Favours; and all thy Love to me may at last be finish'd in those Eternal Joys, which He hath promis'd to those that sincerely love and serve Him.

AND as I have been taught, exhorted, and encourag'd out of thy Holy Word; and have likewise publicly acknowledg'd my Obligations to Thee, and made Profession of Love, and Gratitude, and Dutifulness to thy Divine Majesty: So help me all the Week following to testify the Truth and Honesty of my Heart in all this, by a blameless Conversation; in all Humility, Meekness, Temperance, Righteousness, Charity, and Peace, with all them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart.

LET me be the better for the Sermons I hear, for the Ordinances I enjoy, for the Duties I am employ'd in. Let the Fruit be unto Holiness, and the End Everlasting Life. Be Thou pleas'd to Second the
Preach-

Preaching of thy Word with the powerful Influences of thy Grace, and Holy Spirit, that it may be the Saviour of thy Life to my Soul, and the Power of God to my Salvation.

LET me so hide thy Word in my Heart, that I may not sin against Thee; that it may be as a Treasure within me, to stand me instead in every Hour of Temptation, and in all the Times and Cases of my Need. Preserve me from the Curse of Barrenness under all these holy Means, and abundant Mercies; for it were better for me I never had them, if I am not made more Holy by them, and do not bring forth Fruit worthy of them.

IN Mercy pass by all which thy most pure and holy Eyes (from which nothing is hid) have seen amiss this Day past in any of my Thoughts, Desires, Expressions, or Actions. O pardon my Neglect of what I should have done, and my Guilt of what I have mis-done. Forgive the Iniquities of my Holy Things; and enter not into Judgment with me, according to the best of my Works and Services; but overlook all my Sins, and Failings, and Imperfections, through our Great Mediator and Redeemer.

AND

AND be graciously pleas'd, O Lord, to fulfil the devout Prayers of thy Church, which have been this Day offer'd unto Thee for all Mankind; Especially for all Christian People; for these Kingdoms; for our Sovereign, and all the Royal Family; for our Spiritual Pastors and Governors; for all Sorts and Conditions of Men among us. Let all those Supplications for Grace, Mercy, and Peace, together with all the Praises and Thanksgivings which have been rendred for all thy Blessings, be ever acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord our Strength, and our Redeemer.

As I am every Day nearer my End, let me be every Day more and more fit for keeping an Eternal Sabbath with Thee in Heaven, when Time and Days shall be no more. O Hear me from Heaven, thy Dwelling-place; and when thou Hearest, have Mercy: Forgive the Sins of my Person, and the Sins of my Prayers; and do more for me than I am worthy to expect at thy Hands, for his Sake who alone is *Worthy*, even Jesus Christ our Mediator; in whose comprehensive Words I sum up all my Desires:

Our Father, &c.

The

The foregoing Prayers may be properly
us'd in a Family, only by the change of
Me for Us, and I for We; and making
some other small Alterations, which may
be easily done by a Stroke with a Pen,
under each Word.

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